

Miller

14th July 193

100 BEST BOOKS

By C. LEWIS HIND.

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LIFE'S LESSER MOODS
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AUGUSTUS SAINT GAUDENS
THE EDUCATION OF AN ARTIST
THE DIARY OF A LOOKER-ON
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THE POST IMPRESSIONISTS
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100 Best Books

Chosen by C. LEWIS HIND



LONDON: A. M. PHILPOT, LTD.

69 GREAT RUSSELL STREET, W.C.1

1927

*Dedicated to those who have
compiled Lists of 100 Best Books*



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EXPLANATION

By C. LEWIS HIND.

STRANGE to say, there is novelty about this list of "100 Best Books": not in choice, in price. No volume is more than two shillings: some are less. And the cost of the 100 is exactly Twelve Pounds.

A few of the Classics included are in more than one volume: so the number of volumes is 124, ranging from 1s. 4d. upwards.

Pardon me for dwelling on prices. I do so because no other compiler of 100 Best Books has done so, and because I am thinking of the rather poor, not of the rather rich. Also of the parent, guardian or uncle! What a wonderful gift for a studious boy or girl going to School or College—100 Classics for £12.

Really, the small cost of this Library of Classics is the reason why I had the courage to bring the arduous adventure to a conclusion. It gave the compilation point: it made the man or girl I see in 'bus or tube an aspirant for this Democratic Library. Disadvantages, of course, it has. I have had to exclude many important books because they cost more than two shillings. Sometimes I have almost despaired because I could find no edition of a favourite for less than two and sixpence. On the other hand, there are advantages. I have been obliged to confine myself, in almost every case, to the urbane books that have stood the test of time, and that have been included in such noble publishing adventures as Messrs. J. M. Dent & Sons "Everyman's Library," "Wayfarer's Library," and "Kings' Treasuries"; "The World's Classics," issued by the Oxford University Press; Bohn's

“Popular Library” ; Messrs. Blackie & Son’s “Wallet Library” ; and cheap editions of the Classics issued by Messrs. Longmans, Philip Allan, Collins, Nelson, and Walter Scott.

This fraternizing of literature with low costs, this insistence that no book should be more than two shillings, came to me as a ray of light in the valley of despair, where I stumbled, while endeavouring to compile my list on orthodox lines—books running up to a pound and more each, far beyond the resources of most readers.

I will now explain how I came to embark on the grave and grotesque adventure of choosing 100 Best Books, and the economic conclusion I reached.

I re-state it in rhyme, because if you say a thing again and again, people begin to attend.

Each of the books two shillings or less !
Twelve pounds the cost of the 100 ? Yes !

* * * *

The Adventure began casually and without premeditation, which is the way of many adventures.

An Eminent Man wrote a letter to the Editor of “The Daily Chronicle,” in which my name was mentioned. Eventually, the letter was handed to me to “deal with.”

Its subject was “The 100 Most Interesting Books.”

The Eminent Man stated that he had made inquiries at the London Library and elsewhere, but could glean no information on the question, “Which are the Most Interesting Books ? ” Mark you—Most Interesting, not Best. He added : “If you were about to be marooned on a desert island, and were allowed to choose 100 books as companions, what would your choice be ? ”

Now, the Eminent Man, like myself, remembers the interminable discussions that took place many

years ago about Lord Acton's and Lord Avebury's "100 Best Books," and he recalls that the lists were rather "stodgy." I recall that many of the chosen works were high in price, difficult to obtain, and often impossible to read, such as Hundeshagen's "Kirchenverfassungsgeschichte," proposed by Lord Acton; and I remember that Lord Avebury avoided the difficulty of selecting one of Sir Walter Scott's novels by calling Sir Walter a "book," and making "Scott's Novels" one of the hundred.

One clause in the Eminent Man's letter made me smile, because it was agreeable, and much to the point. Referring to the Second Best Poems discussions, he concluded with this sentence: "Perhaps the most interesting books are Second Best Books."

I wonder.

To sum up: he suggested that I should take up the idea and compile, or cause to be compiled, a list of "100 Most Interesting Books" in all departments—history, biography, theology, philosophy, ethics, science, poetry, fiction, essays, etc.

* * * *

For a month I mused on Interesting Books, jotted down the titles of those that have interested, pleased, moved or influenced me; then I begged friends to give me their lists.

Most of them asked this question: "Do you want me to include the books that interested me years ago, but that I have now outgrown?" For example, an Ex-Governess said: "As a young woman I adored 'The Wide Wide World.' I could not read it to-day, but I never tire of 'John Inglesant'." An Ex-Schoolmaster muttered: "I have been faithful all my life to Huxley's 'Man's Place in Nature,' Matthew Arnold's 'Essays in Criticism,' and Winwood Reade's 'Martyrdom of Man'." He added: "Do you want to include Duty Books,

that is, books we read because we think it is our duty to read them ? ” “ No,” I replied, “ I want the books that people read for pleasure and profit, from interest, not from duty, and those they have not out-grown. I want lists from people who love books, and who disagree violently with Mr. Dooley when he said : ‘ Books is for them that can’t enjoy themselves in any other way ’ .”

How, I asked myself, shall my list of 100 books be compiled ? At that time I had no intention of making it myself, and I would not follow the Victorian custom of asking Distinguished Men for lists. That, course always results in a dull level of orthodoxy. What I wanted was intimate, straightforward lists, say of ten books each, by private people who are book-lovers. In pursuance of this plan I consulted a Musician with a philosophical bent, a Youngish Aunt, and a Young Intelligent Business Man.

Here is the choice of the Musician with a philosophical bent : Montaigne’s “ Essays,” Emerson’s “ Conduct of Life,” Martineau’s “ Endeavours After the Christian Life,” Patmore’s “ Religio Poetae,” Francis Thompson’s “ Poems,” Synge’s “ Playboy of the Western World,” Troward’s “ Lectures on Mental Science,” Hamerton’s “ Intellectual Life,” Grove’s “ Dictionary of Music and Musicians,” Parry’s “ Evolution of the Art of Music.”

Here is the Youngish Aunt’s choice : Hardy’s “ Tess,” “ The Return of the Native ” and “ Jude the Obscure ” ; George Eliot’s “ The Mill on the Floss ” and “ Adam Bede ” ; Hawthorne’s “ Scarlet Letter ” ; Mrs. Ward’s “ Helbeck of Bannisdale ” ; “ Quo Vadis ” ; Dickens’s “ Christmas Books ” and “ Little Dorrit.”

“ I like these books,” said the Youngish Aunt, “ because they give me pleasure—and pain.”

And here is the Young Intelligent Business Man’s choice ; “ It sounds a little priggish,” he said, “ but the books that I have lately added to my small

library are 'Why we Behave like Human Beings,' by George A. Dorsey ; 'Philosophical Application of the General Theory of Relativity,' by Professor Wildon Carr ; 'The Historian's History of the World' ; and 'Elements of Rural Economics,' by Professor Carver. I don't say that I understand every page, but I do say that my horizon has been widened, and my judgment and vision—er—clarified."

So far so good ; but I wanted a great many book-lovers to compile lists, hundreds of them, perhaps thousands, and I felt that the idea of the lists wanted unifying, needed a purpose, and a title something more concrete than Interesting Books, or Helpful Books, or Desert Island Books.

Suddenly the solution came to me. Why not "Julius Cæsar's Library"—a list of 100 books that will be ready for him when he reaches the age of 21, and not only for him, but for Eternal Youth everywhere ?

For the benefit of readers who are not acquainted with Julius Cæsar, I may remark that he is a little boy, alas, fast growing up, who, unlike his namesake, conquers by love.

So I suggested in an article in "The Daily Chronicle" that each reader who is interested in "Julius Cæsar's Library" should write on a postcard the titles and authors of ten books—a personal choice—and send the postcard to me. From these lists I suggested that I might compile "Julius Cæsar's Library" of 100 Best Books.

The Editor smiled upon the idea, and authorized me to say that "The Daily Chronicle" would give prizes of £25, £10 and £5 for the best three lists of ten books each.

That night when Julius Cæsar was tucked up in his bed, flushed and smiling in his sleep, I thought again of his future, and of the list of 100 Books that will be ready for him when he is twenty-one.

His friends, I reflected, known and unknown, are now deciding which ten they will suggest on a postcard, and some are asking this question : " Must it be a book—not an author ? "

In my next article in " The Daily Chronicle," I informed readers that there were no restrictions. The correspondent, I said, who sends in the Bible and Shakespeare, will not be disqualified ; but it is better to submit one book of the Bible, or one play of Shakespeare's. " We want individual preferences," I explained to a Serious Upholsteress whom I encountered, and she replied, " In Shakespeare I would choose ' The Merchant of Venice ' ; in Sir Walter Scott, ' The Lady of the Lake ' ; in Longfellow, ' Hiawatha. ' "

An Oxford Don, who is not a churchgoer, astonished and pleased me by saying that the first on his list would be the New Testament. He also included Plato's " Republic," Boswell's " Life of Johnson," Eckermann's " Conversations with Goethe," and Maeterlinck's " The Life of the Bee."

Later, I tried to draw from two intellectual Sixth Form Schoolboys the ten books of their choice. After much cajoling I extracted these : " The Legacy of Greece," " The Legacy of Rome," " Progress and History," John Morley's " Gladstone," Tennyson's " In Memoriam " and " Maud," Ruskin's " Unto This Last."

Then the Sixth Form boys and I had a talk about a passage in an article by Mr. Hugh Walpole in " The Century Magazine." He tells how, after years of " Reading for Fun," he happened to acquire " Hazlitt's Essays," " Poe's Tales," and " Keats's Poems "—" then I knew that something magical had happened—then I knew that the period of ' Reading for Fun ' was over."

We agreed that a young man of 21 should be a slight reader of novels, in spite of the fact that Mr. Justice McKinnon has put it upon record that, if

he were cast on a desert island, he would find it difficult to decide between "Pickwick" and "Pride and Prejudice."

One day when we were picnicking by the ruins of the Roman Castle at Lympne it occurred to me to ask the little boy for whom the list of 100 Best Books was being compiled, what he thought of "Julius Cæsar's Library."

"It's all right," he replied, "but I don't know what books I shall like when I'm 21—is it a very long time?—because I'm not grown up yet. I'm little now, and I like silly books all about"—(his voice dropped)—"Pirates and Jack the Giant Killers; and I like poetry that sounds nice."

Then we talked about the Romans, and I told him of their mighty works in East Kent and the three fortresses they built, gateways to England, at Lympne, Dover and Richborough. He listened attentively; then he said, "When I am twenty-one I shall like a nice book about these great Romans. I shall be growing out of silly books then."

Looking at his young look, I said to myself, "Plutarch's Lives of the Noble Greeks and Romans" shall be among the Best 100 Books.

* * * *

Nearly 4000 postcards were submitted in the "Julius Cæsar's Library" competition.

Here are the three Prize-winners :

1. Gospel of St. John
2. St. Paul's Epistles.
3. "The Imitation of Christ." Thomas à Kempis.
4. "Confessions of St. Augustine."
5. "Sesame and Lilies." Ruskin.
6. "The Tempest." Shakespeare.
7. "Henry V." Shakespeare.
8. Kipling's Poems.
9. "A Tale of Two Cities." Dickens.
10. "Life of the Bee." Maeterlinck.

1. The Bible.
2. Shakespeare's Plays.
3. Plato's "Death of Socrates."
4. Dante's "Divina Commedia" (in a good translation : perhaps Longfellow's, for the sake of the notes).
5. J. R. Green's "History of the English People."
6. Chaucer's "Canterbury Tales."
7. Quiller-Couch's "Oxford Book of English Verse."
8. Browning's Poems.
9. Tennyson's Poems
10. Ruskin's "Modern Painters."

1. The New Testament.
2. "The Imitation of Christ." Thomas à Kempis.
3. "The Iliad." Homer.
4. "The Divine Comedy." Dante.
5. Chaucer's Poems.
6. "The Tempest." Shakespeare.
7. "Don Quixote." Cervantes.
8. "Life of Johnson." Boswell.
9. "History of the English People." J. R. Green.
10. "David Copperfield." Dickens.

* * * *

Many weeks of arduous work followed, and, in forming "Julius Cæsar's Library," I soon found that Publishers' catalogues were more useful than the 4,000 postcards. Five lists of "100 Best Books" which I laboriously made were discarded, because, always in the scrupulous background of my consciousness drummed this question: "How can Julius Cæsar or any other youth or girl *afford* to buy these 100 Books, many of which are costly and not easy to obtain?"

Then one day, as I have explained in the opening of this Explanation, I had the satisfactory and decisive idea of including no book above two shillings, at a cost of Twelve Pounds for the entire Library. So the scheme became practical and of some use to a world of impoverished book-lovers.

* * * *

From my tempestuous experiences with all sorts of readers, I suggest that it is of little use to ask people to furnish lists of Best Books. At once, almost unconsciously, they begin to fumble mentally with the titles of books they think they ought to read, not those that they are eager to read. The right way—the only way—is to ask them for a list of books they have read with growing interest during the past year—books which were acquired with effort. So, by a round-about course I arrive, do I not, at a kind of answer to the question of the Eminent Man which began the discussion—"Which are the 100 Most Interesting Books?"

The answer is : "Those Which Are The Most Interesting To You." Each individual must make his own choice : the utmost he can get from others are suggestions from their experience.

* * * *

The plan of the following pages is simple. On the left is something about the author : on the right is an extract from the book.

It may be wise to repeat here what I said in the "Explanation" to "100 Best Poems." These are Best Books, not *the* best. Who can say which are *the* Best? Living authors are excluded, and if the reader misses weighty or delightful favourites, I beg him to believe the reason may be that they have not yet been included among the People's Classics at two shillings or less. At any rate Julius Cæsar will have some noble reading for Twelve Pounds, when he has put away childish things, and his Mr. Christopher is gone.

I hope he, and others, will take these 100 Books as a basis for reading, as a starting-point towards other modern and ancient books, that may also become personal companions. These 100 Books, in

124 volumes, in their own special Book-case, should be the groundwork of a reading life.

A word about this Book-case.

It holds the volumes in four shelves, arranged in order from Biography to Travel: it is neat and studious-looking.

On the following pages will be found a picture of the Book-case and an Analysis of my "100 Best Books," with their cost.

C. LEWIS HIND.

*ANALYSIS AND COST OF
100 BEST BOOKS AND BOOKCASE*

ANALYSIS AND COST OF "100 BEST BOOKS."

Subjects.	Books.	Vols.	Prices.		
			£	s.	d.
Biography	8	12	1	4	0
Essays and Belles Lettres..	10	10	0	18	4
Fiction and Romance ..	16	18	1	16	0
History	10	14	1	7	4
Nature	5	5	0	9	6
Poetry and Drama ..	19	23	2	4	8
Religion and Philosophy ..	14	19	1	15	6
Science	7	7	0	13	4
The Arts	4	8	0	16	0
Travel	7	8	0	15	4
	100	124	12	0	0

The Book-case shown on the opposite page, specially designed for this collection, may be seen at the offices of the publishers of "100 Best Books," Messrs. A. M. Philpot, Ltd., 69, Great Russell Street, London, W.C.1, from whom further particulars may be obtained.



THE BOOK-CASE

(Containing the 100 Books, 124 Volumes).

Arranged in Sections of Biography, Essays and Belles Lettres, Fiction and Romance, History, Nature, Poetry and Drama, Religion and Philosophy, Science, The Arts, Travel.

Dimensions: Height 3 ft. 11 in., Width 2 ft. 6 in., Depth 6 in.

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Part I.
BIOGRAPHY.

I

PLUTARCH

A.D. 45-120

Shakespeare, Montaigne and Napoleon read Plutarch's "Lives"—a famous, undying book, a storehouse of significant, out-of-the-way, and occasionally unreliable information. Hosts of readers, through the centuries, have enjoyed Plutarch's character sketches and anecdotes. His omissions are forgiven; for, had he not written, we should have known little about the human side of those 46 Noble Greeks and Romans. He wrote about what interested him.

A Greek, living when Greece was under the Roman domination, Plutarch (Ploutarchos) was an honest man in a corrupt age, an equable man, a disciplined man, who taught philosophy, and was a spiritual guide to seekers.

The biographies were planned by Plutarch in pairs of "Parallel Lives," a Greek and a Roman followed by a Comparison. This Edition bears the honoured name of Dryden, but he was merely Editor-in-Chief.

The modern reader starts as he realizes how often Shakespeare took Plutarch's Facts and Fantasies and touched them to wonder.

I

From PLUTARCH'S "LIVES"
(CÆSAR)

Cæsar died in his fifty-sixth year, not having survived Pompey above four years. That empire and power which he had pursued through the whole course of his life with so much hazard, he did at last with much difficulty compass, but reaped no other fruits from it than the empty name and invidious glory. But the great genius which attended him through his lifetime even after his death remained as the avenger of his murder, pursuing through every sea and land all those who were concerned in it, and suffering none to escape, but reaching all who in any sort or kind were either actually engaged in the fact, or by their Counsels any way promoted it.

The most remarkable of mere human coincidences was that which befell Cassius, who, when he was defeated at Philippi, killed himself with the same dagger which he had made use of against Cæsar. The most signal preternatural appearances were the great comet, which shone very bright for seven nights after Cæsar's death, and then disappeared, and the dimness of the sun, whose orb continued pale and dull for the whole of that year." (Vol. II, page 580).

Plutarch's "Lives of the Noble Greeks and Romans." Dryden's Translation. Revised with an Introduction by Arthur Hugh Clough. Everyman's Library. Dent. 3 vols., 2s. each.

SAMUEL PEPYS

1633-1703

Merry, practical Samuel Pepys, member of an old family, was the son of a London tailor. He rose to the great position of Secretary to the Admiralty, and he did his work well: he regenerated the British Navy. But it is the gusto and frankness of his inimitable "Diary" that has made this seventeenth century lover-of-life famous.

It was written in cipher, for easy-going Pepys was anxious to keep it from the prying eyes of his household. In 1825 the "Diary" was deciphered by the Reverend J. Smith (bless him!) and published by Lord Braybrooke. The fullest edition is that by Wheatley in ten volumes.

The "Diary" extends from 1660 to 1669. Then the sight of Samuel Pepys seemed to fail and his watchful eyes and light heart had to face the Inevitable. The "Diary" ends—"For which and all the discomforts that will accompany my being blind, the good God prepare me."

But he lived and prospered for many years.

2

From PEPYS' " DIARY "

11th. At two o'clock, with very great mirth, we went to our lodging and to bed, and lay till seven, and then called up by Sir W. Batten ; so I rose, and we did some business, and then come Captain Allen, and he and I withdrew, and sang a song or two, and among others, took great pleasure in " Goe and bee hanged, that's twice good bye." The young ladies come too, and so I did again please myself with Mrs. Rebecca ; and about nine o'clock, after we had breakfasted, we sett forth for London, and indeed I was a little troubled to part with Mrs. Rebecca, for which God forgive me. Thus we went away through Rochester. We baited at Dartford, and thence to London, but of all the journeys that ever I made, this was the merriest, and I was in a strange moode for mirth. . . .

17th. Up betimes, and shaved myself after a week's growth ; but, Lord ! how ugly I was yesterday, and how fine to-day ! (Vol. I, p. 149 ; Vol. II, p. 101).

" The Diary of Samuel Pepys." Lord Braybrooke's 1854 Edition. Introduction by Dr. Garnett. Everyman's Library. Dent. 2 vols., 2s. each.

3

SAMUEL JOHNSON

1709-1784

JAMES BOSWELL

1740-1795

What would Johnson have been without Boswell? How much of our picture of Johnson is due to Boswell's genius? Was Boswell taken out of himself, illumined by the greatness of his friend?

These are unanswerable questions. It is sufficient to say that Boswell's "Life of Johnson" is the greatest biography in the language.

Boswell tells us that he had the honour and happiness of enjoying Johnson's friendship for upwards of twenty years: Croker calculated that Boswell met Johnson on 180 days only, excluding the Scotch tour. Never mind: genius has intuitions in which Time has no part. Ah, that was a great day for the world when, in 1763, Boswell had "the supreme happiness to make the acquaintance of Dr. Johnson."

The eighteenth century, from the angle of the hard-driven literary man, lives in these pages, where Johnson the wise, the good, the prejudiced, the undefeated lives, and also the "ineffable" Boswell. Carlyle took a mighty hand in glorifying the pair, with reservations, in his 1832 review in "Fraser's Magazine."

3

From BOSWELL'S "LIFE OF JOHNSON"

Edwards : " You are a philosopher, Dr. Johnson. I have tried too in my time to be a philosopher ; but I don't know how, cheerfulness was always breaking in . . . "

He requested three things of Sir Joshua Reynolds : To forgive him thirty pounds which he had borrowed of him ; to read the Bible ; and never to use his pencil on a Sunday. Sir Joshua readily acquiesced . . .

His figure was large and well formed, and his countenance of the cast of an ancient statue ; yet his appearance was rendered strange and somewhat uncouth, by convulsive cramps, by the scars of that distemper which it was once imagined the royal touch could cure, and by the slovenly mode of dress. He had the use only of one eye ; yet so much does mind govern, and even supply the deficiency of organs, that his visual perceptions, as far as they extended, were uncommonly quick and accurate. So morbid was his temperament, that he never knew the natural joy of a free and vigorous use of his limbs. (Vol. II, 218, 607, 614).

4

EDWARD GIBBON

1737-1794

Said a friend : " Why include Gibbon's Autobiography ? It is a pompous book."

Pompous it is, but it is noble reading, and it is by Gibbon, and those who have little inclination towards his " Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire " may be tempted by this " Autobiography "—this history of the historian.

Gibbon took himself very seriously. Thus he informs the reader of the conception of the " Decline and Fall." " *It was at Rome on the 15th of October, 1764, as I sat musing amidst the ruins of the Capitol, while the bare-footed friars were singing vespers in the temple of Jupiter, that the idea of writing the decline and fall of the City first started into my mind.*"

His high opinion of himself was so fixed that his vanity seems natural. He is never colloquial. The periods of his self-conscious " Autobiography " roll on with imposing effect : as he writes he is wearing, be sure, flowered velvet, with bag and sword.

Edward Gibbon is fixed in fame. " That he should ever be displaced," said Freeman, " seems impossible."

4

From GIBBON'S "AUTOBIOGRAPHY"

The style of the first volume "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire" is, in my opinion, somewhat crude and elaborate ; in the second and third it is ripened into ease, correctness, and numbers ; but in the three last I may have been seduced by the facility of my pen . . .

I have presumed to mark the moment of conception : I shall now commemorate the hour of my final deliverance. It was on the day, or rather night, of the 27th of June, 1787, between the hours of eleven and twelve, that I wrote the last lines of the last page, in a summer house in my garden. After laying down my pen, I took several turns in a *berceau*, or covered walk of acacias, which commands a prospect of the country, the lane, and the mountains. The air was temperate, the sky was serene, the silver orb of the moon was reflected from the waters, and all nature was silent. I will not dissemble the first emotions of joy on recovery of my freedom, and, perhaps, the establishment of my fame. But my pride was soon humbled, and a sober melancholy was spread over my mind, by the idea that I had taken an everlasting leave of an old and agreeable companion, and that whatsoever might be the future date of my *History*, the life of the historian must be short and precarious. (Pages 204, 205).

"Autobiography of Edward Gibbon." As originally edited by Lord Sheffield, with an introduction by J. B. Bury. *World's Classics*, Oxford University Press, 2s.

5

JOHANN WOLFGANG von GOETHE

1749-1832

GEORGE HENRY LEWES

1817-1878

Sometimes biographers shine with the glory of their subject. George Henry Lewes, an intellectual Victorian, is remembered mainly for his "Life of Goethe" and his connection with George Eliot. It was in her company at Weimar, in 1855, that he wrote the last page of this patient, prodigious book. To dip into it is like visiting a land that has been flooded by the waters of catastrophic events. We who were brought up on this "Life" and on Eckermann's "Conversations with Goethe," may be permitted to wonder if the younger generation still reads Goethe, who was for so long the Great Figure in Europe, the man of ripe wisdom, the master in all departments of knowledge, teacher of the creeds of culture and self-development. And he was the Great Lover—the Ideal of Virgin hearts.

Reading this "Life" we are immersed in those leisurely spacious days, which Goethe dominated.

5

From LEWES'S "LIFE OF GOETHE"

He reached Strasburg on the 2nd April, 1770. He was now turned twenty, and a more magnificent youth never, perhaps, entered the Strasburg gates. Long before celebrity had fixed all eyes upon him he was likened to an Apollo ; and once, when he entered a dining-room, people laid down their knives and forks to stare at the beautiful youth. Pictures and busts, even when most resembling, give but a feeble indication of that which was most striking in his appearance ; they give the form of features, but not the play of features ; nor are they very accurate as to the form. His features were large and liberally cut, as in the fine sweeping lines of Greek art. The brow was lofty and massive, and from beneath it shone large lustrous brown eyes of marvellous beauty, their pupils being of almost unexampled size . . .

THE END

His speech was becoming less and less distinct. The last words audible were "More Light!" (Pages 66 and 576).

6

SIR WALTER SCOTT

1771-1832

JOHN GIBSON LOCKHART

1794-1854

This is the Shorter Life prepared by Sir Walter Scott's son-in-law, Lockhart, from the original in 7 volumes—which was certainly too long, as Carlyle complained. Who, having read it, can forget this graphic, simple account of a genius struggling against adversity—that load of debt, not his own, which depressed, no, not depressed, say, harassed Sir Walter's valiant heart in his latter years. Let us think of him rather in the hey-day of his fame when the Prince Regent, at Carlton House, called for, "A bumper, with all the honours, to the Author of 'Waverley,'" and looked significantly, as he was charging his own glass, to Scott.

Andrew Lang, whom we may trust, placed Lockhart's "Life of Scott" among great English biographies, immediately after Boswell's "Johnson," and he said of Lockhart's prose that it is like the English of Swift—all the light is concentrated on the object.

6

From LOCKHART'S "LIFE OF SCOTT"

When we rose from table, Scott proposed that we should all ascend his western turret, to enjoy a moonlight view of the valley. . . . The stairs were dark, narrow and steep ; but the Sheriff piloted the way, and at length there were as many on the top as it could well afford footing for. Nothing could be more lovely than the panorama ; all the harsher and more naked features being lost in the delicious moonlight ; the Tweed and the Gala winding and sparkling beneath our feet ; and the distant ruins of Melrose appearing, as if carved of alabaster, under the black mass of the Eildons. The poet, leaning on his battlement, seemed to hang over the beautiful vision as if he had never seen it before. "If I live," he exclaimed, "I will build me a higher tower, with a more spacious platform, and a staircase better fitted for an old fellow's scrambling." The piper was heard retuning his instrument below, and he called to him for "Lochaber No More." John of Skye obeyed, and as the music rose, softened by the distance, Scott repeated in a low key the melancholy words of the song of exile. (Page 342).

7

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

1809-1865

When Abraham Lincoln, sixteenth President of the United States, was in doubt he consulted God ; when Woodrow Wilson was in doubt, he consulted Colonel House. That, briefly, describes and disassociates them.

The influence of Abraham Lincoln increases. Now he belongs to the ages. Born in poverty, educated in backwoods schools—he was farm-hand, clerk, store-keeper, teacher, President of the United States, and “ Saviour of his country and the Liberator of a race.”

He was a Statesman, not a politician ; he desired to do the right thing, not the politic thing : in every question he strove to dig down to the very foundation, and he expressed himself with the simplicity of greatness. He had humour too.

One of his statues stands in England under the shadow of the Mother of Parliaments. Of himself he said in a letter to a correspondent in 1859 : “ I am, in height, six feet four inches, nearly ; lean in flesh ; dark complexion, with coarse black hair and grey eyes.”

He could not add that he is America's greatest son.

7

From LINCOLN'S
"GETTYSBURG ADDRESS"

Fourscore and seven years ago our fathers brought forth upon this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal. . . .

We are met on a great battlefield of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field as a final resting-place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.

But in a larger sense we cannot dedicate, we cannot consecrate, we cannot hallow this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it far above our power to add or detract. The world will little note nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us, the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us ; that from these honoured dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion ; that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain ; that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom ; and that government of the people, by the people, and for the people, shall not perish from the earth. (Pages 213, 214).

"Speeches and Letters of Abraham Lincoln." Edited by Merwin Roe.
Introduction by the Right Hon. James Bryce. Everyman's Library. Dent. 2s.

8

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

1816-1855

ELIZABETH GASKELL

1810-1865

Boswell is always on the scene. Mrs. Gaskell is never on the scene. Which shews that there are two ways of writing great biography.

What a combination! The author of "Cranford" writes the Life of the author of "Jane Eyre"—such feeling, such restraint. Here are the last words of Charlotte Brontë, who became Mrs. Nicholls, as told by Mrs. Gaskell: "Oh, I am not going to die, am I? He will not separate us; we have been so happy."

A third woman novelist, Miss May Sinclair, has written the Introduction to this edition. She says that of course Mrs. Gaskell was "prodigiously indiscreet," but that she was "right about Charlotte Brontë." She also says it is impossible to put the "Life of Charlotte Brontë" down. That is so.

Haworth and Knutsford—two places that live in literature! Knutsford is Cranford. It was of Haworth that Mrs. Browning was thinking when she sang of women sitting by solitary fires and hearing the nations praising them far off.

8

From MRS. GASKELL'S
"LIFE OF CHARLOTTE BRONTË"

In 1831, she was a quiet, thoughtful girl, of nearly fifteen years of age, very small in figure—"stunted" was the word she applied to herself—but as her limbs and head were in just proportion to the slight fragile body, no word in ever so slight a degree suggestive of deformity could properly be applied to her; with soft, thick, brown hair and peculiar eyes, of which I find it difficult to give a description, as they appeared to me in her later life. They were large, and well shaped; their colour a reddish brown; but if the iris was closely examined, it appeared to be composed of a great variety of tints. The usual expression was of quiet, listening intelligence; but now and then, on some just occasion for vivid interest or wholesome indignation, a light would shine out, as if some spiritual lamp had been kindled, which glowed behind those expressive orbs. I never saw the like in any other human creature . . .

Her hands and feet were the smallest I ever saw; when one of the former was placed in mine, it was like the soft touch of a bird in the middle of my palm. (Pages 60, 61).

"Life of Charlotte Brontë." By Mrs. Gaskell. Introduction by May Sinclair.
Everyman's Library. Dent. 2s.



PART II.
ESSAYS AND BELLES LETTRES.

9

MONTAIGNE

1533—1592

" I teach nothing : I relate," said Montaigne.

But let Hallam, speaking in the dignified, final, pre-Victorian way, introduce him—" Montaigne is the earliest classical writer in the French language, the first whom a gentleman is ashamed not to have read." That may be ; it may also be said that most hard-working writers have, at one time or another, envied Michel Eyquem de Montaigne. When he succeeded to the family estate near Bordeaux he settled himself to a studious life in his library, his famous library, in the third story of his tower, with a view of his garden. He was nearing forty then, and although later he consented, against his will, to be Mayor of Bordeaux, that was from a sense of duty. His real life passed in his Tower. He dipped casually into books, so many books : he did not read them as a task, and he wrote about them, and about himself, taking himself as a participating unit of the polite thinking world, just when he wanted to write. Thus he produced these subjective-objective " Essays," delightful companions and very famous.

9

From MONTAIGNE'S "ESSAYS"

I turn and toss over books, but do not study them ; what of them remains in me is a thing which I no longer acknowledge to be anybody's else . . .

Life in itself is neither good nor evil : it is the place of good or evil, according as you prepare it for them. And if you have lived one day, you have seen all : one day is equal to all other days. There is no other light, there is no other night. This sun, this moon, these stars, and this disposition is the very same which your forefathers enjoyed, and which shall also entertain your posterity . . .

And touching books, history is my chief study, poesy my only delight, to which I am particularly affected ; for, as Cleanthes said, that as the voice being forcibly pent in the narrow gullet of a trumpet at last issueth forth more strong and shriller so meseems that a sentence cunningly and closely couched in measure-keeping poesy darts itself forth more furiously and wounds me even to the quick . . .
(Pages 220, 23, 30).

"Essays." By Montaigne. Translated by John Florio. Introduction by Charles Whibley. *The Wallet Library*. Blackie. 1s. 6d.

10

FRANCIS BACON

1561-1626

Churchill wrote :

“ By truth inspir'd our Bacon's force
Open'd the way to learning's source.”

Pope wrote :

“ If parts allure thee, think how Bacon shin'd,
The wisest, brightest, meanest of mankind ! ”

Hallam wrote :

“ Lord Bacon might have been emphatically the high priest of nature, if he had not been the Chancellor of James I. He wrote of science like a Lord Chancellor.”

When I asked an eminent lawyer what he thought of Francis Bacon, Lord Verulam and Viscount St. Albans, he replied : “ He was a great lawyer and the Father of modern science. I prefer his ‘ Advancement of Learning ’ to the ‘ Essays.’ ”

The busy world prefers the “ Essays ”—their artless construction, their sledge-hammer wisdom. He was a good beginner. Many of the opening sentences of the “ Essays ” have passed into the language. In our youth how magnificent the opening sentence “ Of Atheism ” seemed : “ I had rather believe all the fables in the Legend, and the Talmud, and the Alcoran, than that this universal frame is without a mind.”

Bacon was a contemporary of Shakespeare. The Shakespeare-Bacon legend still survives.

10

From BACON'S "ESSAYS" (OF GARDENS)

God Almighty first planted a garden ; and, indeed, it is the purest of human pleasures ; it is the greatest refreshment to the spirits of man ; without which buildings and places are but gross handyworks ; and a man shall ever see that, when ages grow to civility and elegancy, men come to build stately, sooner than to garden finely ; as if gardening were the greater perfection. I do hold it in the royal ordering of gardens, there ought to be gardens for all the months in the year, in which, severally, things of beauty may be then in season . . .

And because the breath of flowers is far sweeter in the air (where it comes and goes, like the warbling of music) than in the hand, therefore nothing is more fit for that delight, than to know what be the flowers and plants that do best perfume the air . . .

As for the making of knots, or figures, with divers coloured earths, that they may lie under the windows of the house on that side which the garden stands, they be but toys ; you may see as good sights many times in tarts . . . (Pages 127, 128, 129, 130).

II

IZAACK WALTON

1593-1683

Izaak Walton, the "Father of Angling," was a sweet-souled, contemplative man, who spent much of his time, when he was not fishing, "in the families of the eminent clergymen of England." As Andrew Lang said, "he had a natural taste for a Bishop."

He lived a peaceful life in stirring times. For 51 years he was in business, from which he retired with a "modest competence." He occupied half of a shop, two doors west of Chancery Lane. There is some doubt whether he was a linen-draper or ironmonger, but there is no doubt that important men sought him, and would chat with this delightful shopkeeper-fisherman over the counter—Dr. Donne, for example, who was Vicar of St. Dunstan's in the West, and who had Walton as parishioner, biographer, disciple and friend.

Beloved by his contemporaries, he lived for 90 years, and has left us in "The Compleat Angler" a delightful book on fishing, with delightful asides on nature and poetry.

II

From WALTON'S "COMPLEAT ANGLER"

And now I shall tell you that which may be called a secret. I have been a-fishing with old Oliver Henley, now with God, a noted fisher both for Trout and Salmon ; and have observed, that he would usually take three or four worms out of his bag, and put them into a little box in his pocket, where he would usually let them continue half an hour or more, before he would bait his hook with them . . .

When I go to dress an Eel thus, I wish he were as long and as big as that which was caught in Peterborough river, in the year 1667 ; which was a yard and three-quarters long. If you will not believe me, then go and see at one of the coffee-houses in King Street, in Westminster . . .

There is also in Kent, near to Canterbury, a Trout called there a Fordidge Trout, a Trout that bears the name of the town where it is usually caught, that is accounted the rarest of fish ; many of them near the bigness of a Salmon, but known by their different colour ; and in their best season they cut very white ; and none of these have been known to be caught with an angle, unless it were one that was caught by Sir George Hastings, an excellent angler, and now with God . . . (Pages 117, 161, 61).

JONATHAN SWIFT

1667—1745

"Gulliver's Travels" are included in the "Fiction and Romance" section, where the life of Swift is touched upon. Here, in "The Journal To Stella," we are shown not only the wild, faithful heart of Swift; we are also given a fascinating picture of London—the London wherein Swift moved—of the early 18th century.

When Swift left Dublin for London in 1710 he left behind him two dear friends, Mrs. Esther Johnson (Stella) and Mrs. Rebecca Dingley. The name Stella is not mentioned in the letters in this volume. It was an after-thought.

Stella and Jonathan! Their precise relations remain a mystery, and the "little language" they used may never be deciphered. It certainly had a meaning for "this strange, grim, middle-aged lover" and his mistress. But was Stella his mistress, as we define the word? It does not matter. Here are the letters. We are moved as we read them. And no one can prevent us from reading between the lines.

From SWIFT'S "JOURNAL TO STELLA"

London, Sept. 10, 1710. To-day I dined with Lord Mountjoy at Kensington ; saw my mistress, Ophy Butler's wife, who is grown a little charmless. I sat till ten in the evening with Addison and Steele ; Steele will certainly lose his Gazetteer's place, all the world detesting his engaging in parties. At ten I went to the coffee-house, hoping to find Lord Radnor, whom I had not seen. He was there ; for an hour and a half we talked treason heartily against the Whigs, their baseness and ingratitude. And I am come home rolling resentments in my mind, and framing schemes of revenge : full of which (having written down some hints), I go to bed. I am afraid MD dined at home, because it is Sunday ; and there was the little half-pint of wine ; for God's sake be good girls, and all will be well. Ben Tooke was with me this morning . . .

London, Dec. 2, 1710. Steele, the rogue, has done the impudentest thing in the world ; he said something in a Tatler, that we ought to use the word Great Britain, and not England, in common conversation, as, the finest lady in Great Britain, &c. . . . (Pages 7, 65).

13

HORACE WALPOLE

1717—1797

Horace Walpole, who became fourth Earl of Oxford, loved letter-writing, and spent much of his time on this gracious hobby, to the delight of succeeding generations. His letters make a perfect bedside book. They amuse: they do not excite.

This volume is but a selection. Walpole wrote over 3,000 letters. Mrs. Paget Toynbee's edition already runs to sixteen volumes, and more are being discovered.

Macaulay wrote of Horace Walpole, "He was the most eccentric, the most artificial, the most fastidious, the most capricious of men. His mind was a bundle of inconsistent whims and affectations."

Which is only another way of saying that he was a perfect letter writer.

He lived in Arlington Street, afterwards in Berkeley Square, but his joy was his "Gothic Castle," Strawberry Hill, Twickenham.

As a young man he had said, "I desire to die when I have nobody left to laugh with me." He died at 80.

13

From WALPOLE'S "LETTERS"

We are now mad about tar-water, on the publication of a book that I will send you, written by Dr. Berkeley, Bishop of Cloyne. The book contains every subject from tar-water to the Trinity ; however, all the women read, and understand it no more than they would if it were intelligible. A man came into an apothecary's shop the other day. "Do you sell tar-water?" "Tar-water?" replied the apothecary, "why, I sell nothing else!" Adieu! . . .

You will be diverted to hear that Mr. Gibbon has quarrelled with me. He lent me his second volume in the middle of November. I returned it with a most civil panegyric. He came for more incense, I gave it, but alas! with too much sincerity; I added, "Mr. Gibbon, I am sorry you should have pitched on so disgusting a subject as the Constantinopolitan History . . . Though you have written the story as well as it could be written, I fear few will have patience to read it." He coloured; all his round features squeezed themselves into sharp angles; he screwed up his button mouth, and rapping his snuff-box, said, "It had never been put together before"—*so well*, he meant to add—but gulped it. He meant *so well* certainly, for Tillemont, whom he quotes in every page, has done the very thing. (Pages 18, 344, 345).

Select Letters of Horace Walpole. With an Introduction. Eohn's Popular Librarian Bell, 2s.

14

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

1772-1834

John Wilson wrote of Coleridge in "Noctes Ambrosianæ," "I have heard Coleridge. That man is entitled to speak on till Doomsday—or rather the genius within him—for he is inspired. Wind him up and away he goes . . ."

"A king of men," wrote Carlyle.

Byron, being Byron, remarked :

*"And Coleridge, too, has lately taken wing,
But like a hawk encumber'd with his hood,
Explaining metaphysics to the nation—
I wish he would explain his explanation."*

It must have been wonderful to hear Coleridge talk. His contemporaries—a string of great men—testify to the sweep, soar, and length of his Table Talk.

With Wordsworth he discussed poetry, and planned the "Lyrical Ballads" of 1798, which contained "The Ancient Mariner"; but it would take a book adequately to treat S.T.C. Poet, critic, metaphysician, talker, who dazzled his world, drugged himself with opium, and is immortal.

"Come back in memory," wrote Lamb, "like as thou wert in the dayspring of thy fancies—the dark pillar not yet turned . . ."

From COLERIDGE'S "TABLE TALK"

Every man is born an Aristotelian, or a Platonist. I do not think it possible that any one born an Aristotelian can become a Platonist ; and I am sure no born Platonist can ever change into an Aristotelian. They are the two classes of men, beside which it is next to impossible to conceive a third. The one considers reason a quality, or attribute ; the other considers it a power. I believe that Aristotle never could get to understand what Plato meant by an idea . . .

Hooker wished to live to finish his Ecclesiastical Polity ; so I own I wish life and strength had been spared to me to complete my Philosophy. For, as God hears me, the originating, continuing, and sustaining wish and design in my heart were to exalt the glory of his name ; and, which is the same thing in other words, to promote the improvement of mankind. But *visum aliter Deo*, and His will be done. . . .

Some music is above me ; most music is beneath me. I like Beethoven and Mozart—or else some of the ærial compositions of the elder Italians, as Palestrina and Carrissimi. And I love Purcell. (Pages 99, 296, 240, 241).

15

CHARLES LAMB

1775-1834

It has been said a thousand times : let it be said again—Charles Lamb's place in literature is among writers that we love. He who knows not the "Essays of Elia" is cut off from much of the enjoyment of life. Lamb, with his stutter, could say anything. "And pray, Mr. Lamb," asked a lady, "how do you like children?" "B-b-boiled ma-am," he replied.

His friends were many—who could help loving him, and appreciating his humour, insight and knowledge of the things that he cared about? Of all his friends, Coleridge, whom he first met at Christ's Hospital, was the dearest. "Coleridge is dead! Coleridge is dead!" he would exclaim, with melancholy wonder, after that great light went out. And his sister, Mary Lamb! His devotion to her through her trouble is one of the bright episodes in literature or life.

He played on our English language as if it were a violin : his "Essays" are among our English cherished possessions.

15

From LAMB'S "ESSAYS OF ELIA"

"A clear fire, a clean hearth, and the rigour of the game." This was the celebrated wish of old Sarah Battle (now with God), who, next to her devotions, loved a good game of whist . . .

The very garments of a Quaker seem incapable of receiving a soil ; and cleanliness in them to be something more than the absence of its contrary. Every Quakeress is a lily ; and when they come up in bands to their Whitsun conferences, whitening the easterly streets of the metropolis, from all parts of the United Kingdom, they show like troops of the Shining Ones . . .

I love Quaker ways, and Quaker worship. I venerate the Quaker principles. It does me good for the rest of the day when I meet any of their people in my path. When I am ruffled or disturbed by any occurrence, the sight, or quiet voice of a Quaker, acts upon me as a ventilator, lightening the air, and taking off a load from the bosom. But I cannot like the Quakers (as Desdemona would say) "to live with them." I am all over sophisticated—with humours, fancies, craving hourly sympathy. I must have books, pictures, theatres, chit-chat, scandal, jokes, ambiguities, and a thousand whims-whams, which their simpler taste can do without. I should starve at their primitive banquet. . . .

I am no longer . . . clerk to the Firm of, &c. I am Retired Leisure. I am to be met with in trim gardens. (Pages 42, 63, 78 and 264).

The "Essays of Elia and Eliana." By Charles Lamb. With a biographical Essay by H. S. Bohn's Popular Library, Bell, 2s.

16

WILLIAM HAZLITT

1778-1830

He was a deadly controversialist, a master of irony, a lover of life, and also a man of sentiment (see the Extract).

At the age of 14, we are told, he wrote "A Project of a New Theory of Criminal and Civil Legislation"; but his great hour, in early life, was at the age of 20, when he heard Coleridge, "whose voice was far above singing," preach in the Unitarian Chapel at Shrewsbury. Hazlitt was born at Maidstone, where his father was a Unitarian minister.

By the by, Charles Lamb said of Coleridge's preaching, "It's only his fun."

Hazlitt was a true man of letters. He flirted with painting (portraits five guineas each), lectured, criticized, reported in the House of Commons, wrote books, including the "frantic Liber Amoris," and gradually settled down to Essays—his claim to fame.

*He said at the end, "Well, I have had a happy life."
Charles Lamb was at his bedside.*

From HAZLITT'S "ESSAYS"

When I was quite á boy, my father used to take me to the Montpelier Tea-gardens at Walworth. Do I go there now? No; the place is deserted, and its borders and its beds o'erturned. Is there, then, nothing that can

Bring back the hour
Of glory in the grass, of splendour in the flower?

Oh! yes, I unlock the casket of memory, and draw back the warders of the brain; and there this scene of my infant wanderings still lives unfaded, or with fresher dyes. A new sense comes upon me, as in a dream; a richer perfume, brighter colours start out; my eyes dazzle; my heart heaves with its new load of bliss, and I am a child again. My sensations are all glossy, spruce, voluptuous, and fine: they wear a candied coat, and are in holiday trim. I see the beds of larkspur with purple eyes; tall holy-oaks, red and yellow; the broad sunflowers, caked in gold, with bees buzzing round them; wildernesses of pinks, and hot-glowing peonies; poppies run to seed; the sugared lily, and faint mignonette, all ranged in order, and as thick as they can grow, the box tree borders; the gravel walks, the painted alcove, the confectionary, the clotted cream: I think I see them now with sparkling looks; or have they vanished while I have been writing this description of them? No matter; they will return again when I least think of them. (Pages 156, 157).

Essays of William Hazlitt. Selected and edited by C. Calvert. The King's Treasuries. Dent. 1s. 4d.

17

SAINTE-BEUVE

1804-1869

Charles Augustin Sainte-Beuve has been described as "the greatest literary critic of modern times." As such he is ranked in France, and by some in England. In my youth I knew two or three young men of letters who considered his "Causeries de Lundi," which they read in French, as the highest expression of the literary and logical French mind. Certainly they are a delight even in translation: you seem to be walking by still waters, through verdant meadows far removed from the noise and ruggedness of modern life.

Sainte-Beuve began his Monday Causeries in the "Constitutional" in 1861. He transferred them to the "Moniteur," and finally, in 1869, to the "Temps."

He wrote, "I never get a day off. About mid-day on Monday I lift up my head and breathe freely for an hour. Then the door shuts again, and I'm in prison for a week."

His literary production was large and various. Sixty volumes do not contain it.

From SAINTE-BEUVE'S "ESSAYS"

A classic, according to the usual definition, is an old author canonised by admiration, and an authority in his particular style. The word *classic* was first used in this sense by the Romans. With them not all the citizens of the different classes were properly called *classici*, but only those of the chief class, those who possessed an income of a certain fixed sum . . .

At first the only true classics for the moderns were the ancients. The Greeks, by peculiar good fortune and natural enlightenment of mind, had no classics but themselves . . .

A true classic, as I should like to hear it defined, is an author who has enriched the human mind, increased its treasure, and caused it to advance a step ; who has discovered some moral and not equivocal truth, or revealed some external passion in that heart where all seemed known and discovered ; who has expressed his thought, observations, or invention, in no matter what form, only provided it be broad and great, refined and sensible, sane and beautiful in itself ; who has spoken to all in his own peculiar style, a style which is found to be also that of the whole world, a style new without neologism, new and old, easily contemporary with all time. (Pages 1, 2, 3, and 4).

"Essays." By Sainte-Beuve. With an Introduction by Elizabeth Lee. The Scott Library. Walter Scott. 1s. 6d.

18

AN ANTHOLOGY OF ENGLISH PROSE

From The Venerable BEDE

673-735

To ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

1850-1894

Here, in 400 pages, is the pageant of English prose from Bede to Stevenson, a sweep of over eleven centuries. Here you may view the minds of Bede, Wycliffe, Caxton, Tyndale, Raleigh, Hooker, Hobbes, Browne, Jeremy Taylor, Bunyan, Dryden, Defoe, Fielding, Burke, Carlyle, Macaulay, Matthew Arnold, William Morris, Andrew Lang, Robert Louis Stevenson and many others.

The extract I have chosen is from Bede, because he was Bede, and because he tells the famous story of the poet Caedmon, the first Anglo-Saxon writer of note, who died about 680 A.D.

Bede, "the greatest name in the ancient literature of England," was born at Monkwearmouth, near Durham. He studied at the Benedictine monastery there, and passed later to the daughter-monastery at Jarrow. His industry was as consistent and fertile as his piety.

18

From BEDE'S
"ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY"
(The Poet Caedmon)

There was in this abbess's monastery a certain brother, particularly remarkable for the grace of God, who was wont to make pious and religious verses, so that whatever was interpreted to him out of Scripture, he soon after put the same into poetical expressions of much sweetness and humility, in English, which was his native language. By his verses the minds of many were often excited to despise the world, and to aspire to heaven . . . Having lived in a secular habit till he was well advanced in years, he had never learned anything of versifying ; for which reason being sometimes at entertainments, when he saw the instrument come towards him, he rose up from table and returned home.

Having done so at a certain time, and gone out of the house where the entertainment was, to the stable, where he had to take care of the horses that night, he there composed himself to rest at the proper time ; a person appeared to him in his sleep and saluting him by his name, said : "Caedmon, sing some song to me." He answered : "I cannot sing ; for that was the reason why I left the entertainment." The other who talked to him, replied : "However, you shall sing." "What shall I sing ?" rejoined he. "Sing the beginning of created beings," said the other. (Page 4).

"An Anthology of Prose." From Bede to R. L. Stevenson. Arranged by S. L. Edwards. Everyman's Library. Dent. 2s.

PART III.
FICTION AND ROMANCE.

SIR THOMAS MALORY

flourished 1470

This "noble and joyous book," called by Sir Walter Scott "the best prose romance the English language can boast of," was translated "from the Frensshe" by Malory, and finished between March 1469 and March 1470. He described it as "a most pleasant jumble and summary of the legends about Arthur." The translation was printed by Caxton in 1485.

Hardly anything is known about Malory except that he was a knight and that he may have been a Welshman.

The influence of "Le Morte d'Arthur" has been enormous, not only on English prose, but also on the minds of moderns — Tennyson, Swinburne, Matthew Arnold, &c.

Endless conjectures have been made as to the origin of the Arthurian legends, but whether they spring from Breton, Welsh, Cornish or Scotch sources, it is certain that they were fashioned by Malory into immortal literature.

19

From MALORY'S
"LE MORTE d'ARTHUR"

Then Sir Ector threw his shield, sword, and helm from him. And when he beheld Sir Launcelot's visage, he fell down in a swoon. And when he waked it were hard any tongue to tell the doleful complaints that he made for his brother. "Ah, Launcelot," he said, "thou were head of all Christian knights, and now I dare say," said Sir Ector, "thou, Sir Launcelot, there thou liest, that thou were never matched of earthly knight's hand. And thou were the courteoust knight that ever bare shield. And thou were the truest friend to the lover that ever bestrad horse. And thou were the truest lover of a sinful man that ever loved woman. And thou were the kindest man that ever struck with sword. And thou were the goodliest person that ever came among press of knights. And thou was the meekest man and the gentlest that ever ate in hall among ladies. And thou were the sternest knight to thy mortal foe that ever put spear in the rest." Then there was weeping and dolour out of measure. (Vol II, Page 400).

CERVANTES

1547—1616

Don Quixote and Sancho Panza are world figures. They are the life and soul of this famous book, and they have passed into art. Who does not know the Knight of the Sorrowful Countenance, his horse, and his henchman in a hundred pictures and drawings?

Children and adults read "Don Quixote." It may have been the purpose of Cervantes to laugh chivalry romances out of fashion, but we forget his purpose in our laughter, and our love for the noble and compassionate tilter at windmills.

Cervantes, sprung from an old and once renowned family, had an adventurous life as soldier and writer. His left hand and arm were permanently disabled at the battle of Lepanto. It is said that he composed the first part of "Don Quixote" in prison by fits and starts: the second part was written because some rascal had foisted a spurious second part upon the public.

From CERVANTES' "DON QUIXOTE"

In a village of La Mancha, the name of which I purposely omit, there lived not long ago one of those gentlemen who usually keep a lance upon a rack, an old target, a lean horse, and a greyhound for coursing . . .

The age of our gentleman bordered upon fifty years. He was of a robust constitution, spare-bodied, of a meagre visage ; a very early riser, and a keen sportsman. . . .

He fell into one of the strangest conceits that ever entered the head of any madman ; which was, that he thought it expedient and necessary, as well for the advancement of his own reputation, as for the public good, that he should commence knight-errant, and wander through the world, with horse and arms, in quest of adventures, and to put in practice whatever he had read to have been practised by knights-errant ; redressing all kind of grievances, and exposing himself to danger on all occasions ; that by accomplishing such enterprises he might acquire eternal fame and renown. The poor gentleman already imagined himself at least crowned Emperor of Trapisonda by the valour of his arm ; and thus wrapped up in these agreeable delusions, and hurried on by the strange pleasure he took in them, he hastened to put in execution what he so much desired. (Vol. I, Pages 9, 10, 12, 13).

"Don Quixote." By Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra. Translated by Charles Jervas. Introduction by James Fitzmaurice-Kelly. The World's Classics. Oxford University Press. 2 vols. 2s. each.

21

JONATHAN SWIFT

1667—1745

The vivid brain of Jonathan Swift gave way in the end. Merciful, after suffering, was the lethargy preceding unconsciousness.

"And Swift expires a driv'ler and a show." Thus Johnson in "The Vanity of Human Wishes."

Call him "the greatest of English satirists" or in Lytton's words, "the master mocker of Mankind," and you get near to Swift.

Add to it Leigh Hunt's gentle sentence, "The other day, mention was made of 'a Dean of St. Patrick's,' now living; as if there was, or ever could be, more than one Dean of St. Patrick's."

Well, he wrote the "Tale of a Tub," the "Journal to Stella," and "Gulliver's Travels," once (perhaps still) beloved by children for the verisimilitude of the amazing adventures, and ever revered by adults for what they read between the lines.

From SWIFT'S "GULLIVER'S TRAVELS"
(A Voyage to the Houyhnhnms)

I must freely confess that the many virtues of those excellent quadrupeds, placed in opposite view to human corruptions, had so far opened my eyes and enlightened my understanding, that I began to view the actions and passions of man in a very different light, and to think the honour of my own kind not worth managing, which, besides, it was impossible for me to do before a person of so acute a judgment as my master, who daily convinced me of a thousand faults in myself, whereof I had not the least perception before, and which among us would never be numbered even among human infirmities ; I had likewise learned from his example an utter detestation of all falsehood or disguise, and truth appeared so amiable to me that I determined upon sacrificing everything to it.

Let me deal so candidly with the reader as to confess that there was yet a much stronger motive for the freedom I took in my representation of things. I had not been a year in this country before I contracted such a love and veneration for the inhabitants that I entered on a firm resolution never to return to human kind, but to pass the rest of my life among these admirable Houyhnhnms in the contemplation and practice of every virtue, where I could have no example or incitement to vice. (Pages 243, 244).

"Gulliver's Travels." By Jonathan Swift. *The World's Classics.* Oxford University Press. 2s.

HENRY FIELDING

1707-1754

"Joseph Andrews" was Fielding's first novel. It was published in 1742, seven years before "Tom Jones." Begun in raillery of Richardson's "Pamela," it ended in a lively novel of character combined with gusto and frankness.

Sir Walter Scott called Fielding the "Father of the English Novel." This lusty satirist makes Joseph Andrews the chaste victim of women. The points of the hero are described (see Extract) as if he were a heroine.

Sprung from a good West of England family, Fielding was educated at Eton and Leyden, was called to the Bar, and ended as a Justice of the Peace for Westminster. He died in Lisbon, whither he had gone in search of health.

Thackeray said, "His wit is wonderfully wise and detective : he may have low tastes, but not a mean mind."

22

From FIELDING'S "JOSEPH ANDREWS"

Mr. Joseph Andrews was now in the one-and-twentieth year of his age. He was of the highest degree of middle stature ; his limbs were put together with great elegance, and no less strength ; his legs and thighs were formed in the exactest proportion ; his shoulders were broad and brawny, but yet his arm hung so easily, that he had all the symptoms of strength without the least clumsiness. His hair was of a nut-brown colour, and was displayed in wanton ringlets down his back ; his forehead was high, his eyes dark, and as full of sweetness as of fire ; his nose a little inclined to the Roman ; his teeth white and even ; his lips full, red, and soft ; his beard was only rough on his chin and upper lip ; but his cheeks, in which his blood glowed, were overspread with a thick down ; his countenance had a tenderness joined with sensibility inexpressible. Add to this the most perfect neatness in his dress, and an air which, to those who have not seen many noblemen, would give an idea of nobility. (Page 25).

"The History of the Adventures of Joseph Andrews and his friend, Mr. Abraham Adams." By Henry Fielding. With an Introduction by Professor Saintsbury. Everyman's Library. Dent. 2s.

23

OLIVER GOLDSMITH

1728-1774

Goldsmith was born but 21 years after Fielding. Yet what a difference in their technique and outlook. "The Vicar of Wakefield" is a slow-moving, placid stream; "Joseph Andrews" is a river with whirlpools.

Goldsmith, like Lamb, is one of the loved figures in literature, and I daresay that among quiet folk "The Vicar of Wakefield" is still one of the loved books.

Let the Great speak. Dr. Johnson said, "No man was more foolish when he had not a pen in his hand, or more wise when he had."

Hazlitt said, "If Goldsmith had never written anything but the two or three first chapters of "The Vicar of Wakefield, or the character of a village School-master, they would have stamped him a man of genius."

"The Vicar of Wakefield"—that gentle classic—was published in 1766, and made Goldsmith's reputation as a novelist.

From GOLDSMITH'S
"VICAR OF WAKEFIELD"

My wife now kept up the conversation, though not the argument. She observed that several very prudent men of our acquaintance were free-thinkers, and made very good husbands ; and she knew some sensible girls that had skill enough to make converts of their spouses. "And who knows, my dear," continued she, "what Olivia may be able to do. The girl has a great deal to say upon every subject, and to my knowledge is very skilled in controversy."

"Why, my dear, what controversy can she have read?" cried I. "It does not occur to me that I ever put such books into her hands ; you certainly over-rate her merit." "Indeed, papa," cried Olivia, "she does not. I have read a great deal of controversy. I have read the disputes between Thwackum and Square ; the controversy between Robinson Crusoe and Friday the savage, and now am employed in reading the controversy in Religious Courtship." "Very well," cried I, "that's a good girl. I find you are perfectly qualified for making converts ; and so go help your mother to make the gooseberry-pie." (Pages 44 and 45).

24

SIR WALTER SCOTT

1771-1832

"Ivanhoe" was published in 1819. In it the Wizard of the North opened a new vein of gold. He was ill when writing "Ivanhoe." We are told that he reclined on a sofa, groaning and dictating, or, at a moment of excitement in the story, rising up, pacing the room and acting the parts.

Lockhart says that "Ivanhoe" was received "with a more clamorous delight" than any of the Scotch novels had been.

If it is not serious history, writes Ernest Rhys, it is history's play book.

As an historian Scott was for the spirit rather than for the letter. "I neither can nor do pretend," he said, "to the observation of complete accuracy, even in matters of outward costume, much less in the more important points of language and manners."

Would that Scott could have seen Sir Arthur Sullivan's glorious grand opera "Ivanhoe," first produced in January, 1891, "book" by Julian Sturgis, at the Palace Theatre.

From SCOTT'S "IVANHOE"

In a hall, the height of which was greatly disproportioned to its extreme length and width, a long oaken table, formed of planks rough-hewn from the forest, and which had scarcely received any polish, stood ready prepared for the evening meal of Cedric the Saxon. The roof, composed of beams and rafters, had nothing to divide the apartment from the sky excepting the planking and thatch ; there was a huge fireplace at either end of the hall, but as the chimneys were constructed in a very clumsy manner, at least as much of the smoke found its way into the apartment as escaped by the proper vent. The constant vapour which this occasioned, had polished the rafters and beams of the low-browed hall, by encrusting them with a black varnish of soot . . .

In the centre of the upper table, were placed two chairs more elevated than the rest, for the master and mistress of the family, who presided over the scene of hospitality, and from doing so derived their Saxon title of honour, which signifies "the Dividers of Bread."

To each of these chairs was added a footstool, curiously carved and inlaid with ivory, which mark of distinction was peculiar to them. One of these seats was at present occupied by Cedric the Saxon . . .
(Pages 44, 45, 46).

"Ivanhoe." By Sir Walter Scott. With an Introduction by Ernest Rhys. Everyman's Library. Dent. 2s.

25

JANE AUSTEN

1775—1817

Jane Austen is a perennial. Am I right in supposing that men adore her more than women? The late A. B. Walkley took her to his cultured, sophisticated heart. W. E. Henley called her Jane. Macaulay gave her tremendous praise. "Wonderful creature," he styled her. And he added a stupid thing. He said "Read 'Northanger Abbey'; worth all Dickens and Pliny put together."

Admirers multiply. In a public speech Mr. John Baily announced that he had read "Pride and Prejudice" thirty times, and he hoped that he might live to read it another twenty times. Mr. John Buchan, who was in the chair, said that after thirty years reading he was confident that her best novel is "Persuasion."

I can almost see Jane smile.

"Pride and Prejudice" was written when she was about 22 years of age.

She was graceful with brown curly hair: she sang ballads prettily, and was dexterous with her needle.

25

From JANE AUSTEN'S
"PRIDE AND PREJUDICE"

"My dear Mr. Bennet," said his lady to him one day, "have you heard that Netherfield Park is let at last?"

Mr. Bennet replied that he had not.

"But it is," returned she, "for Mrs. Long has just been here, and she told me all about it."

Mr. Bennet made no answer.

"Do you not want to know who has taken it?" cried his wife, impatiently.

"You want to tell me, and I have no objection to hearing it."

This was invitation enough.

"Why, my dear, you must know, Mrs. Long says that Netherfield is taken by a young man of large fortune from the north of England; that he came down on Monday in a chaise and four to see the place, and was so much delighted with it that he agreed with Mr. Morris immediately; that he is to take possession before Michaelmas, and some of his servants are to be in the house by the end of next week."

"What is his name?"

"Bingley."

"Is he married or single?"

"Oh, single, my dear, to be sure! A single man of large fortune; four or five thousand a year. What a fine thing for our girls!" (Pages 1 and 2).

"Pride and Prejudice." By Jane Austen. Collins' Pocket Classics. 2s.

26

VICTOR HUGO

1802-1885

"Notre Dame de Paris" was issued in 1831, one year after "Hernani."

How authorities differ !

*Here is Swinburne on "Notre Dame de Paris"—
"To attempt the praise of such a work would be only less idle than to refuse it. Louis the Eleventh has been painted by many famous hands, but Hugo's representation of him, as compared for example with Scott's, is as a portrait by Velasquez to a portrait by Vandyck."*

And here is W. E. Henley. "A pretentious but picturesque and moving historical romance in which he enters into competition with Sir Walter, and comes badly off." Henley added: "Abounding insincerity and self-sufficiency scarce to be distinguished now and then from an immense stupidity."

But the world reads "Notre Dame" with avidity, sometimes bored, always with wonder.

Of Victor Hugo as Poet, Henley said: "He found French poetry a place of brick and stucco: he left it a palace builded of jewels."

From VICTOR HUGO'S "NOTRE DAME"

Quasimodo, whilst looking over Paris from the top of his steeple, saw but one single remaining light, twinkling at a window in the topmost story of a lofty and gloomy building ; close by the Porte St. Antoine. That building was the Bastille, and that twinkling light was Louis XI's candle.

Louis XI had, in fact, been at Paris for the last two days. He was to set out again the next day but one for his citadel of Plessis, or Montilz-les-Tours. He seldom made his appearance in his good city of Paris ; and when he did appear, it was during very short intervals, as he did not there feel himself surrounded by a sufficient abundance of pitfalls, gibbets and Scottish archers.

He had come that day to sleep at the Bastille. His grand chamber at the Louvre, five toises square, with its grand chimney-piece loaded with twelve great beasts and thirteen great prophets, and his great bed, eleven feet by twelve, were little to his taste. He felt himself lost amidst all those grandeurs. This good homely king preferred the Bastille with a chamber and a bed of humbler dimensions ; and, besides, the Bastille was stronger than the Louvre.

It was, in fact, in France, like "the Tower" in England, the grand seat and stronghold of the *ancien régime*—its dark battlements formed the very crest of that system of feudal oppression . . .

(Pages 398, 399).

"*Notre Dame de Paris.*" By Victor Hugo. With an Appreciation by Algernon C. Swinburne. Everyman's Library. Dent. 2s.

27

GEORGE BORROW

1803-1881

Borrow was a linguist (he also knew Romany), a traveller and a writer of splendid prose.

Lavengro, meaning "Word-Master," was the name given to him by his friends the Gypsies. Indeed, he was almost an adopted member of that fascinating, wandering fraternity.

"And you are what is called a Gipsy King!"

"Ay, ay, a Romany Kral."

"Are there other Kings?"

"Those who call themselves so; but the true Pharaoh is Petulengro."

His books, usually autobiographical, are a tonic. Who does not know them?—"The Bible in Spain," "Wild Wales," "Lavengro" with its sequel "The Romany Rye," &c.

He loved horses, boxing, good ale and the open air.

Theodore Watts-Dunton has left us a striking description of Borrow's mighty figure, frank and child-like gaze, East Anglian accent, and racy, whimsical talk.

"No man's writing can take you into the country as Borrow's can."

From BORROW'S "LAVENGRO"

"What is your opinion of death, Mr. Petulengro?" said I, as I sat down beside him.

"My opinion of death, brother, is much the same as that in the old song of Pharaoh . . ."

"And do you think that is the end of man?"

"There's an end of him, brother, more's the pity."

"Why do you say so?"

"Life is sweet, brother."

"Do you think so?"

"Think so! There's night and day, brother, both sweet things; sun, moon and stars, brother, all sweet things; there's likewise a wind on the heath. Life is very sweet, brother; who would wish to die?"

"I would wish to die——"

"You talk like a Georgio—which is the same as talking like a fool. Were you a Romany Chal, you would talk wiser. Wish to die, indeed! A Romany Chal would wish to live for ever!"

"In sickness, Jasper?"

"There's the sun and stars, brother."

"In blindness, Jasper?"

"There's the wind on the heath, brother; if I could only feel that, I would gladly live for ever."
(Pages 180, 181).

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE

1804—1864

Hawthorne belongs to the elder America—to the America of New England, where a group of distinguished literary men flourished. Their fine minds sprouted, as it were, from Old England, and produced books as different from Sinclair Lewis's "Main Street" as Nash's Regent Street was different from the present Regent Street.

There is mystery in Hawthorne's work and an eerie sense of the hand of the past directing the present. Lowell said of his friend in "A Fable for Critics"

*"There is Hawthorne, with genius so shrinking and rare
That you hardly at first see the strength that is there."*

"The House of the Seven Gables," still lingering, but somewhat changed, is at Salem, Massachusetts, but the romance was not written there. Hawthorne had removed to Lenox. It took him five months to write, and with it he repeated the great success he had made with "The Scarlet Letter."

Lowell rightly said: "It seems to me that the 'House' is the most valuable contribution to New England history that has been made."

From HAWTHORNE'S
"THE HOUSE OF THE SEVEN GABLES"

Half-way down a bye-street of one of our New England towns stands a rusty wooden house, with seven acutely-peaked gables, facing towards various parts of the compass, and a huge clustered chimney in the midst. The street is Pyncheon Street ; the house is the old Pyncheon House ; and an elm tree, of wide circumference, rooted before the door, is familiar to every town-born child by the title of the Pyncheon-elm. On my occasional visits to the town aforesaid, I seldom fail to turn down Pyncheon Street for the sake of passing through the shadow of these two antiquities—the great elm tree and the weather-beaten edifice.

The aspect of the venerable mansion has always affected me like a human countenance, bearing the traces not merely of outward storm and sunshine, but expressive, also, of the long lapse of mortal life, and accompanying vicissitudes that have passed within. (Page 1).

29

THACKERAY

1811—1863

"Vanity Fair" was issued in yellow-covered monthly numbers in 1847, while Thackeray was contributing the "Snob Papers" to "Punch." At first it fell flat. Suddenly, the public accepted it, and by the time it was finished Thackeray's reputation was made.

"Pendennis" followed; and then "Esmond."

The success of "Vanity Fair" was due mainly to two women—Mrs. Carlyle and Charlotte Brontë. One said: "Very good indeed; beats Dickens out of the world." The other dedicated the second edition of "Jane Eyre" to Mr. Thackeray with the comment that "he resembles Fielding as an eagle does a vulture."

Thackeray had some trouble with the title. At last it came to him in the middle of the night. He jumped out of bed and ran three times round the room, crying: "Vanity Fair! Vanity Fair! Vanity Fair!"

How well this intimate classic wears! Becky Sharp cannot die.

From THACKERAY'S "VANITY FAIR"

Then came the struggle and parting below. Words refuse to tell it. All the servants were there in the hall—all the dear friends—all the young ladies—the dancing master who had just arrived ; and there was such a scuffling, and hugging, and kissing, and crying, with the hysterical *yoops* of Miss Swartz, the parlour-boarder, from her room, as no pen can depict, and as the tender heart would fain pass over. The embracing was over ; they parted—that is, Miss Sedley parted from her friends. Miss Sharp had demurely entered the carriage some minutes before. Nobody cried for leaving her.

Sambo, of the bandy-legs, slammed the carriage door on his young, weeping mistress. He sprang up behind the carriage. "Stop !" cried Miss Jemima, rushing to the gate with a parcel. "It's some sandwiches, my dear," said she to Amelia. "You may be hungry, you know ; and Becky, Becky Sharp, here's a book for you that my sister—that is, I—Johnson's *Dictionary*, you know ; you mustn't leave us without that. Good-bye. Drive on, coachman. God bless you !"

And the kind creature retreated into the garden, overcome with emotion.

But, lo ! and just as the coach drove off, Miss Sharp put her pale face out of the window and actually flung the book back into the garden . . . (Pages 10 and 11).

"Vanity Fair: a Novel without a Hero." By William Makepeace Thackeray. With an introduction by the Hon. Whitelaw Reid. Everyman's Library. Dent. 2s.

CHARLES DICKENS

1812-1870

"David Copperfield" was the favourite novel of Dickens. He wrote: "Of all my books, I like this the best. Like many fond parents, I have in my heart of hearts a favourite child, and his name is David Copperfield."

The plan of it was autobiographical, plus the amazing group of odd and delightful characters that sparkle and spread through its pages, from Mr. Micawber to Mr. Dick, from Steerforth to Uriah Heep. What a gallery!

"He has created in this book of 'David Copperfield,' " says Mr. Chesterton, "creatures who cling to us and tyrannise over us, creatures whom we would not forget if we could, creatures who are more actual than the man who made them."

Charles Dickens died at Gadshill, the detached house above Strood and Rochester, which he had longed for as a boy. He was buried in Westminster Abbey, and the English-speaking world mourned.

From DICKENS'
"DAVID COPPERFIELD"

My father had left a small collection of books in a little room upstairs, to which I had access (for it adjoined my own), and which nobody else in our house ever troubled. From that blessed little room, "Roderick Random," "Peregrine Pickle," "Humphrey Clinker," "Tom Jones," "The Vicar of Wakefield," "Don Quixote," "Gil Blas," and "Robinson Crusoe," came out, a glorious host, to keep me company. They kept alive my fancy, and my hope of something beyond that place and time—they, and the "Arabian Nights," and the "Tales of Genii,"—and did me no harm; for whatever harm was in some of them was not there for me; I knew nothing of it. It is astonishing to me now, how I found time, in the midst of my porings and blunderings over heavier themes, to read those books as I did. It is curious to me how I could ever have consoled myself under my small troubles (which were great troubles to me), by impersonating my favourite characters in them—as I did—and by putting Mr. and Miss Murdstone into all the bad ones—which I did, too. I have been Tom Jones (a child's Tom Jones, a harmless creature) for a week together. I have sustained my own idea of Roderick Random for a month at a stretch, I verily believe. (Pages 51 and 52).

"The Personal History of David Copperfield." By Charles Dickens. With an Introduction by Gilbert K. Chesterton. Everyman's Library. Dent. 2s.

31

CHARLES READE

1814-1884

Charles Reade was educated at Magdalen College, Oxford, and called to the Bar in 1843. He travelled much, "developed a craze for trading in violins," and did not seriously put pen to paper until he was nearer forty than thirty.

He produced thirteen dramas and eighteen novels, some of which are remembered, such as the play "Masks and Faces," written with Tom Taylor, and "It is Never Too Late to Mend."

He wrote one masterpiece, "The Cloister and The Hearth." This mediæval novel—dealing in Reade's staccato, dramatic, dogmatic way with the conditions that produced Erasmus—lives.

Swinburne thought highly of Charles Reade. He was aware that "Reade can never forget Reade," but in comparing him with Dumas he said: "There are scenes in 'The Cloister and the Hearth' which Dumas, for all his excellent heart and all his brilliant genius, could hardly have written or conceived."

31

From CHARLES READE'S

"THE CLOISTER AND THE HEARTH"

Margaret, sister and survivor of the brothers Van Eyck, left Flanders, and came to end her days in her native country. She bought a small house near Tergou. In course of time she heard of Gerard, and saw some of his handiwork : it pleased her so well that she sent her female servant, Reicht Heynes, to ask him to come to her. This led to an acquaintance ; it could hardly be otherwise, for little Tergou had never held so many as two zealots of this sort before. At first the old lady damped Gerard's courage terribly. At each visit she fished out of holes and corners drawings and paintings, some of them by her own hand, that seemed to him unapproachable ; but if the artist overpowered him, the woman kept his heart up. She and Reicht soon turned him inside out like a glove ; among other things they drew from him what the good monks had failed to hit upon, the reason why he did not illuminate, viz., that he could not afford the gold, the blue, and the red, but only the cheap earths, and that he was afraid to ask his mother to buy the choice colours, and was sure he should ask her in vain. Then Margaret Van Eyck gave him a little brush-gold, and some vermilion and ultramarine, and a piece of good vellum to lay them on. (Page 20).

"The Cloister and the Hearth." *A Tale of the Middle Ages.* By Charles Reade. With an Introduction by A. C. Swinburne. Everyman's Library. Dent. 2s.

TURGENEV

1818-1883

The extract "From a Farmer's Note-book" printed at the head of Chapter I of "Virgin Soil" is "To turn over virgin soil, it is necessary to use a deep plough going well into the earth, not a surface plough gliding lightly over the top."

And "Virgin Soil?"

Much has happened in Russia, terrible things, since this memorable book was first published in 1876, and first translated in 1877 and 1878. It opened to those who read it in the early eighties and later, a new view of Russia. To-day—but the mind of Turgenev remains. What clarity, what decision!

E. R. says: "Turgenev was the first writer who was able, having Slavick and universal imagination enough for it, to interpret modern Russia to the outer world."

Turgenev died in exile in Paris. By his own wish his remains were carried "home" and buried in the Volkoff Cemetery.

From TURGENEV'S "VIRGIN SOIL"

"Here it is!" Paklin exclaimed, and handed her the photograph.

Mashurina thrust it into her pocket quickly, scarcely glancing at it, and without a word of thanks, flushing bright red, she put on her hat and made for the door.

"Are you going?" Paklin asked. "Where do you live? You might tell me that, at any rate."

"Wherever I happen to be."

"I understand. You don't want me to know. Tell me at least, are you still working under Vassily Nikolaevitch?"

"What does it matter to you?"

"Or someone else, perhaps Sidor Sidoritch?"

Mashurina did not reply.

"Or is your director some anonymous person?"

Mashurina had already stepped across the threshold.

"Perhaps it is someone anonymous!"

She slammed the door.

Paklin stood for a long time motionless before this closed door.

"Anonymous Russia!" he said at last. (Page 317).

33

GEORGE ELIOT (MARIAN EVANS)

1819-1880

Shall it be, I asked myself, "Adam Bede," "Romola" or "Middlemarch"—titles that meant so much to readers in the sixties and seventies of last century. I decided on "Adam Bede," published in 1859, because it was her first great success. Mrs. Poyser, Hetty and Dinah became almost realities to her host of readers. They tell me that the present generation does not read George Eliot. Who knows?

Marian Evans, who assumed the pen-name of George Eliot, was a learned woman. She began by translating Strauss's "Leben Jesu," and Feuerbach's "Essence of Christianity." In 1856 she produced her first story, "The Sad Fortunes of the Rev. Amos Barton," which paved the way for her immense success as a novelist; but Victorian tongues wagged and Victorian heads shook at her connection with George Henry Lewes. She was a courageous woman. After Lewes's death she married John Cross, whom many knew but a few years ago, I among them.

From GEORGE ELIOT'S "ADAM BEDE"

Arthur had laid his hand on the soft arm that was nearest to him, and was stooping towards Hetty with a look of coaxing entreaty. Hetty lifted her long dewy lashes, and met the eyes that were bent towards her with a sweet, timid, beseeching look. What a space of time those three moments were, while their eyes met and his arms touched her ! Love is such a simple thing when we have only one-and-twenty summers and a sweet girl of seventeen trembles under our glance, as if she were a bud first opening her heart with wondering rapture to the morning. Such young unfurrowed souls roll to meet each other like two velvet peaches that touch softly and are at rest ; they mingle as easily as two brooklets that ask for nothing but to entwine themselves and ripple with ever interlacing curves in the leafiest hiding places. While Arthur gazed into Hetty's dark, beseeching eyes, it made no difference to him what sort of English she spoke ; and even if hoops and powder had been in fashion, he would very likely not have been sensible then that Hetty wanted those signs of high breeding. (Page 145).

HERMAN MELVILLE

1819-1891

Chambers's "Biographical Dictionary," published in 1899, has this about Herman Melville: "Born in New York City, August 1, 1819. He became a sailor, but in 1842, disliking the captain's harshness, deserted from a whaling ship at the Marquesas Islands, where he was kept four months as the prisoner of a savage tribe in the Typee Valley. His "Typee" (1846) and "Omoo" (1847) record his adventures.

Since that date, Herman Melville's "Moby-Dick" has bounded into a tardy and well-deserved fame in America and Great Britain. It is the epic of the Whale—of one terrible whale, "Moby-Dick." Surely, no wild sea story ever had the gusto of this breathless narrative told in whirling prose.

"Moby-Dick, or the Whale" was first published in New York in 1851, and in England in the same year in a three-volume expurgated edition. It fell flat. The later fame of the story was mainly due to an enthusiastic article published a few years ago by Miss Viola Meynell.

From HERMAN MELVILLE'S
"MOBY-DICK"

"Whosoever of ye raises me a white-headed whale with a wrinkled brow and a crooked jaw ; whosoever of ye raises me that white-headed whale, with three holes punctured in his starboard fluke—look ye, whosoever of ye raises me that same white whale, he shall have this gold ounce, my boys ! . . ."

Suddenly the waters around them slowly swelled in broad circles ; then quickly upheaved, as if sideways sliding from a submerged berg of ice, swiftly rising to the surface. A low rumbling sound was heard ; a subterraneous hum ; and then all held their breaths ; as bedraggled with trailing ropes, and harpoons, and lances, a vast form shot lengthwise but obliquely from the sea. Shrouded in a thin drooping veil of mist, it hovered for a moment in the rainbowed air ; and then fell swamping back into the deep. Crushed thirty feet upwards, the waters flashed for an instant like heaps of fountains, then brokenly sank in a shower of flakes, leaving the circling surface creamed like new milk round the marble trunk of the whale. (Pages 196 and 667).

PART IV.
HISTORY.

35

VARIOUS WRITERS

A.D. I—A.D. 1154

The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, the "substantial monument" of Britain's early history, begins thus: "A.D. I. Octavianus reigned fifty-six winters; and in the forty-second year of his reign Christ was born."

By A.D. 455 the "Chronicle" has become more personal to us. "A.D. 455. This year Hengest and Horsa fought with Wurtgern the king on the spot that is called Aylesford." The "Chronicle" ends in A.D. 1154, the paragraph opening thus: "In this year died the King Stephen: and he was buried where his wife and his son were buried, at Faversham; which monastery they founded."

In a learned Introduction, the Rev. James Ingram gives the history of the precious documents forming the "Anglo-Saxon Chronicle," which contain "the original and authentic testimony of contemporary writers to the most important transactions of our forefathers by sea and land."

In parts, this mine into which historians delve is of absorbing interest.

From "THE ANGLO-SAXON CHRONICLE

A.D. 694. This year the people of Kent covenanted with Ina, and gave him 30,000 pounds in friendship, because they had burned his brother Mull. Wihtred, who succeeded to the kingdom of Kent, and held it thirty-three winters, was the son of Egbert, Egbert of Erkenbert, Erkenbert of Eadbald, Eadbald of Ethelbert. And as soon as he was king, he ordained a great council to meet in the place that is called Bapchild ; in which presided Wihtred, King of Kent, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Brihtwald, and Bishop Tobias of Rochester ; and with him were collected abbots and abbesses, and many wise men, all to consult about the advantage of God's churches that are in Kent . . .

A.D. 896. This same year wrought the aforesaid army a work by the Lea, twenty miles above the city of London. Then, in the summer of this year, went a large party of the citizens, and also of other folk, and made an attack on the work of the Danes ; but they were there routed, and some four of the King's thanes were slain. In the harvest afterward the king encamped close to the city, whilst they reaped their corn, that the Danes might not deprive them of the crop. (Pages 45 and 74).

FROISSART

C. 1337—C. 1419

Jean Froissart, or Sir John Froissart, is the most vivid of all the mediæval chroniclers. Sir Walter Scott highly admired this lively and romantic traveller, who "transported him back to the days of Cressy and Poitiers," and furnished him with material for "Ivanhoe."

Appetizing is the beginning of his Chronicles: "To encourage all valorous hearts, and to show them honourable examples, I, John Froissart, will begin to relate the actions of——"

We are told that Froissart gathered his materials in courts and on highways.

He was born at Valenciennes some time between 1333 and 1337. At the age of nineteen he began to write the history of the wars of his time. In 1360 he set forth on his adventurous travels, and was graciously received by Philippa of Hainault, wife of Edward III. In 1395 he was welcomed by Richard II. The death of that monarch, his benefactor, seems to have killed Froissart's desire to travel and write.

From " THE CHRONICLES " OF FROISSART

When dinner was half over, a knight of the name of Dymock entered the hall completely armed, and mounted on a handsome steed, richly barbed with crimson housings. The knight was armed for wager of battle, and was preceded by another knight bearing his lance. He himself had his drawn sword in one hand, and his naked dagger by his side. The knight presented the king with a written paper, the contents of which were, that if any knight or gentleman should dare to maintain that King Henry was not a lawful sovereign, he was ready to offer him combat in the presence of the king, when and where he should be pleased to appoint.

The king ordered this challenge to be proclaimed by heralds, in six different parts of the town and the hall ; and to it no answer was made.

King Henry having dined and partaken of wine and spices in the hall, retired to his private apartments, and all the company separated. Thus passed the coronation day of King Henry. (Page 614).

37

VARIOUS WRITERS

1435—1505

Merely family letters, but enormously interesting to-day, because they deal with family affairs in the reigns of Henry VI, Edward IV, Richard III and Henry VII.

The Norfolk family of the Pastons started humbly, with Clement Paston, a peasant, who died in 1413. The rise of the family began with Clement's son, William, who became a judge and a landed proprietor. More and more important became the Pastons. The last of them to carry on the name was William, second Earl of Yarmouth, who survived his three sons and died in 1732, "when his titles became extinct, leaving his estate to be sold for the payment of his debts, etc."

In these letters this ancient Norfolk family lives—all sorts of letters, voices from the grave, written not for publication, only for the eyes of the family, so often scattered, so calligraphically pious, so interested in their home affairs.

37

From "THE PASTON LETTERS"

Letter LII. MEDICAL (1452)

To my right worshipful husband, John Paston, be this delivered in haste.

Right worshipful husband, I commend me to you, I pray you that ye will do buy two dozen trenchers, for I can none get in this town ; also I pray you that ye will send me a book with chardeqweyns that I may have of in the morning, for the air be not wholesome in this town, therefore I pray you heartily let John Suffield bring it home with him.

No more, but the blessed Trinity have you in his keeping, and send you good speed in all your matters. Written on St. Leonard's even.

My uncle Philip commends him to you, and he hath been so sick since that I came to Reedham, that I wend he should never have escaped it, nor not is like to do but if he have ready help, and, therefore, he shall into Suffolk this next week, to mine aunt, for there is a good physician, and he shall look to him.

My Lady Hastyns told me that Heydon hath spoken to Jeffrey Boleyn of London, and is agreed with him that he should bargain with Sir John Fastolf to buy the manor of Blicking as it were for himself, and if Boleyn buy it in truth Heydon shall have it . . .

Yours,

Margaret Paston. (Vol. I, page 57).

"The Paston Letters." Written by Various Persons of Rank or Consequence during the Reigns of Henry VI, Edward IV, Richard III, and Henry VII, with precis of the less important letters. Introduction by Mrs. Archer Hind. Everyman's Library. Dent. 2 vols. 2s. each.

38

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI

1469—1527

Macaulay whitewashed Machiavelli in his brilliant essay. Hear him, "We are acquainted with few writings which exhibit so much elevation of sentiment, so pure and warm a zeal for the public good, or so just a view of the duties and rights of citizens as those of Machiavelli."

Yet the name has coined a sinister word. All the dictionaries have it—"Machiavel—Unscrupulous schemer: one who practises duplicity in statecraft."

Anyhow, Machiavelli, author of "The Prince," still discussed, was a subtle and powerful thinker and writer. He had a bitter and tedious story to tell in "Florentine History," ranging from the thirteenth to the late fifteenth century—wars, wars, wars! His "golden pen" struggles with the vagaries of victory and defeat, but he allows himself literary pauses for reflection at the beginning of each book or chapter. These are the gems. As to the interminable fighting, may it not be taken as a warning?

But we cannot condemn. We had our Great War—worse than anything bruised Florence suffered.

From MACHIAVELLI'S
" FLORENTINE HISTORY "

It always was, and it is only reasonable that it always should be, the aim of those who go to war to enrich themselves and to impoverish their enemy ; nor is victory sought for any other purpose but to take from others what you desire, in order that you may become powerful and your enemy weak. Hence it follows that whenever either victory impoverishes you, or an acquisition makes you no richer, then the war has either over-reached or stopped short of the object for which it was undertaken. The prince, or the republic, is benefited by victory when the enemy is wiped out and the victor remains master of the booty and ransom. But victory is only a mockery when the enemy, although conquered, is not utterly destroyed, or when the booty and ransom goes to the soldiers and not to the state. Princes and republics in that position are more unhappy in victory than in defeat, because they have to endure in defeat the injuries which their enemies inflict, whilst in victory they are defrauded by their allies, whose injuries inflicted without provocation are harder to endure, seeing that the state has of necessity to lay fresh burdens and taxes upon its subjects. If a prince has any humanity in him, he cannot entirely rejoice in a victory which only brings fresh miseries to his people . . . (Page 228).

" *Florentine History.*" By Niccolo Machiavelli. Translated by W. K. Marriott. With an Introduction. Everyman's Library. Dent. 2s.

39

EDWARD GIBBON

1737—1794

This is part of a great book, the Constantinople section of Gibbon's "The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire." The object of this abridgment is to give the reader a taste of Gibbon, a hint of what awaits him in "The Decline and Fall" described by Frederick Harrison as "the most masterly survey of an immense epoch ever elaborated by the brain of man."

Gibbon and his "Autobiography" are glanced at in the Biography Section: here it may not be pedagogic to recall that Constantinople was founded in 330 A.D. by Constantine the Great, from whom it derives its name, on a site partly occupied by the ancient Byzantium; and that the original Byzantium was founded about 658 B.C.

The last years of Gibbon were not happy. He grew stout through good living and want of exercise; but it is his mind that counts.

From GIBBON'S
"STORY OF CONSTANTINOPLE"

(Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire)

So eager was the impatience of the prince and people, that Michael made his triumphal entry into Constantinople only twenty days after the expulsion of the Latins. After the first transport of devotion and pride, the emperor sighed at the dreary prospect of solitude and ruin. As if they were conscious of their approaching exile, the industry of the Latins had been confined to the work of pillage and destruction. Trade had expired under the pressure of anarchy and distress, and the numbers of inhabitants had decreased with the opulence of the city. The French barons and the principal families had retired with their emperor, but the patient and humble crowd of Latins was attached to the country, and indifferent to the change of masters. Instead of banishing the factories of the Pisans, Venetians, and Genoese, the prudent conqueror accepted their oaths of allegiance, encouraged their industry, confirmed their privileges, and allowed them to live under the jurisdiction of their proper magistrates. Of these nations the Pisans and Venetians preserved their respective quarters in the city ; but the services and power of the Genoese deserved at the same time the gratitude and the jealousy of the Greeks. They were speedily recalled, and settled in the exclusive possession of the suburb of Galata, an advantageous post, in which they revived the commerce and insulted the majesty of the Byzantine empire. (Pages 241, 242).

Gibbon's "Story of Constantinople." From "The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire." Arranged and Edited by F. W. Tickner. *The King's Treasuries of Literature.* Dent. 1s 4d.

40

THOMAS CARLYLE

1795—1881

"Past and Present" was issued in 1843, and in that year Emerson published in "The Dial" his review of Carlyle's "New Poem" as he called "Past and Present," also describing it as "his 'Iliad' of English woes."

Well, England has had various other woes—and triumphs—since 1843, when Carlyle regarded her condition as "one of the most ominous ever seen in this world."

If the English-speaking peoples still read Carlyle, they read him for his genius, not for his spleen, for his strange, glorious "half-mad" way of writing, and "the obtrusion of his whims."

Our heads keep cool under his jeremiads, but our hearts still respond to the glory of his tumultuous prose, and the nobility of his thought.

If Emerson has cognizance of mundane things, perhaps he smiles his quiet, grave smile at the spectacle of England continuing, now, as then, to muddle through.

From CARLYLE'S "PAST AND PRESENT"

Things rise, I say, in that way. The *Iliad* Poem, and indeed most other poetic, especially epic things, have risen as the Liturgy did. The great *Iliad* in Greece, and the small *Robin Hood's Garland* in England, are each, as I understand, the well-edited "Select Beauties" of an immeasurable waste imbroglio of Heroic Ballads in their respective centuries and countries. Think what strumming of the sevenstringed heroic lyre, torturing of the less heroic fiddle-catgut, in Hellenic Kings' Courts, and English wayside Public Houses ; and beating of the studious Poetic brain, and gasping here, too, in the semi-articulate windpipe of Poetic men, before the Wrath of a Divine Achilles, the Prowess of a Will Scarlet or Wakefield Pindar, could be adequately sung ! Honour to you, ye nameless great and greatest ones, ye long-forgotten brave ! (Page 127).

41

MACAULAY

1800—1859

Lord Melbourne said, " I wish I were only as sure about anything as Macaulay is about everything."

John Wilson wrote, " The son of a Saint, who seems himself to be something of a reviewer, is insidious as a serpent, but fangless as the slow-worm." John Wilson also wrote : " What ! Poetry from Macaulay ? Ay, and why not ? The Young Poets all want fire ; Macaulay is full of fire. The Young Poets are somewhat weakly ; he is strong."

We, who were brought up on Macaulay, have heard our fathers speak of his famous first review on Milton, in the 1825 " *Edinburgh Review* " ; of the sensation " *The Lays of Ancient Rome* " made when they were published in 1842 ; and of the enthusiasm which greeted the first volumes of his " *History* " in 1848. Inaccuracy for the sake of epigram ! Little we cared. He made history readable and fascinating.

His essays on English History equal in extent those on Foreign History, on Controversy, and his Critical and Miscellaneous essays.

Macaulay died in his arm-chair, and was buried in Westminster Abbey.

From MACAULAY'S "ESSAYS"
(LORD CLIVE)

We have always thought it strange that, while the history of the Spanish empire in America is familiarly known to all the nations of Europe, the great actions of our countrymen in the East should, even among ourselves, excite little interest. Every schoolboy knows who imprisoned Montezuma, and who strangled Atahualpa. But we doubt whether one in ten, even among English gentlemen of highly cultivated minds, can tell who won the battle of Buxah, who perpetrated the massacre of Patna, whether Sujah Dowlah ruled in Oude or in Travancore, or whether Holkar was a Hindoo or a Mussulman. Yet the victories of Cortes were gained over savages who had no letters, who were ignorant of the use of metals, who had not broken in a single animal to labour, who wielded no better weapons than those which could be made out of sticks, flints, and fish bones, who regarded a horse soldier as a monster, half man and half beast, who took a harquebusier for a sorcerer, able to scatter the thunder and lightning of the skies. The people of India, when we subdued them, were ten times as numerous as the Americans whom the Spaniards vanquished, and were, at the same time, quite as highly civilized as the victorious Spaniards. (Page 479).

"Critical and Historical Essays." By Thomas Babington Macaulay. With Introduction and Glossary by A. J. Grieve. Everyman's Library. Dent. 2s.

JOHN LOTHROP MOTLEY

1814—1877

Motley was born at Dorchester, near Boston, U.S.A. : he died near Dorchester, England.

His life was brilliant, and his finest work, " The Rise of the Dutch Republic " is a classic. The composition of it occupied him ten years.

Motley has been described as one of the handsomest men of his time, with a striking resemblance to Lord Byron, and a most captivating manner.

He was Minister to Austria and to Great Britain ; his letters to " The Times " on the American Civil War were treated with immense respect ; he was a friend of Bismarck ; his " Life " was written by Oliver Wendell Holmes.

Always a student, an independent one who insisted on his own method, which was that of a " bee in a flower garden," he began his literary career by writing historical novels ; but he found his true vocation in history—in his fascinating, picturesque, learned, domineering " The Rise of the Dutch Republic."

From MOTLEY'S
"THE RISE OF THE DUTCH REPUBLIC"

The exchequer was crippled. Holland and Zeland were cut in twain by the occupation of Schouwen and the approaching fall of its capital. Germany, England, France, all refused to stretch out their hands to save the heroic but exhaustless little provinces. It was at this moment that a desperate but sublime resolution took possession of the Prince's mind. There seemed but one way left to exclude the Spaniards for ever from Holland and Zeland, and to rescue the inhabitants from impending ruin. The Prince had long brooded over the scheme, and the hour seemed to have struck for its fulfilment. His project was to collect all the vessels, of every description, which could be obtained throughout the Netherlands. The whole population of the two provinces, men, women, and children, together with all the movable property of the country, were then to be embarked on board this numerous fleet, and to seek a new home beyond the seas. The windmills were then to be burned, the dykes pierced, the sluices opened in every direction, and the country restored for ever to the ocean, from which it had sprung. (Vol. II, Pages 502, 503).

"The Rise of the Dutch Republic": A History. By John Lothrop Motley. With an Introduction by V. R. R. Everyman's Library. Dent. 3 vols. 2s. each

43

JAMES ANTHONY FROUDE

1818—1894

Froude's "Nemesis of Faith," is, I suppose, forgotten, or at any rate, not often read to-day. Forgotten, too, is his "Shadows of the Clouds," by "Zeta," a psychological novel, suppressed in 1847.

In 1844 Froude received deacon's orders, and was sometime under Newman's influence.

The "Nemesis of Faith" was published in 1848. The outcry cost Froude his fellowship. The "Nemesis" was publicly burned by William Sewell, divine.

After these adventures in persecution, Froude settled down to becoming the most picturesque historian of his day, and the most outspoken.

"Froude had this merit," says Mr. Hilaire Belloc, "a merit he shared with Huxley alone of his contemporaries—that he imposed his convictions. He fought against resistance." As a writer of English prose, few writers of his day excelled Froude; but it is whispered that his historical scholarship is matter of controversy. In this he is not alone.

From FROUDE'S "SHORT STUDIES"

I know nothing in English history much more striking than the answer given by Archbishop Warham to the complaints of the English House of Commons after the fall of Cardinal Wolsey. The House of Commons complained that the clergy made laws in Convocation which the laity were excommunicated if they disobeyed. Yet the laws made by the clergy, the Commons said, were often at variance with the laws of the realm.

What did Warham reply? He said he was sorry for the alleged discrepancy; but, inasmuch as the laws made by the clergy were always in conformity with the will of God, the laws of the realm had only to be altered, and then the difficulty would vanish.

What must have been the position of the clergy in the fulness of their power, when they could speak thus on the eve of their prostration? You have only to look from a distance at any old-fashioned cathedral city, and you will see in a moment the mediæval relations between Church and State. The cathedral is the city. The first object you catch sight of as you approach is the spire tapering into the sky, or the huge towers holding possession of the centre of the landscape—majestically beautiful—imposing by mere size amidst the large forms of Nature herself. As you go nearer, the vastness of the building impresses you more and more. The puny dwelling-places of the citizens creep at its feet. (Pages 44, 45).

"Short Studies on Great Subjects." By James Anthony Froude. *Everyman's Library*. Dent. 2s.

44

JOHN RICHARD GREEN

1837—1883

No history was ever so welcome to the English-speaking peoples as Green's "*A Short History of the English People*." Is is for everybody. In it, Kings and Wars take their places as episodes in a nation's life. For the first time we were given, not periods of our history, but the whole splendid story. Published in 1874, it was the only History of England penned by one man. It had an extraordinary success; 150,000 copies were sold within 15 years. Who can wonder? It is picturesque, vivid, and as readable as a romance. Certain modern historians question its accuracy here and there. They may, man is not infallible.

He died at the age of 46. Much of his work was written under stress of illness. In 1882 his "*Making of England*" was published, but he did not live to complete his "*Conquest of England*," which was edited by his widow.

From GREEN'S "A SHORT HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH PEOPLE"

It is with the landing of Hengest and his war band at Ebbsfleet on the shores of the Isle of Thanet that English history begins. No spot in Britain can be so sacred to Englishmen as that which first felt the tread of English feet. There is little, indeed, to catch the eye in Ebbsfleet itself, a mere lift of higher ground with a few grey cottages dotted over it, cut off nowadays from the sea by a reclaimed meadow and a sea wall. But, taken as a whole, the scene has a wild beauty of its own. To the right the white curve of Ramsgate cliffs looks down on the crescent of Pegwell Bay; far away to the left, across grey marsh levels, where smoke-wreaths mark the sites of Richborough and Sandwich, arises the dim cliff line of Deal. Everything in the character of the spot confirms the national tradition which fixed here the first landing place of our English fathers, for great as the physical changes of the country have been since the fifth century, they have told little on its main features. It is easy to discover in the misty level of the present Minster Marsh what was once a broad inlet of sea parting Thanet from the mainland of Britain, through which the pirate boats of the first Englishmen came sailing with a fair wind to the little gravel spit of Ebbsfleet. (Vol. I, Page 7).

"A Short History of the English People." By John Richard Green. Edited and Revised by L. Cecil Jane, with an Appendix, bringing the History up to date, by R. P. Farley. Everyman's Library. Dent. 2 vols. 2s. each.

PART V.
NATURE.

45

GILBERT WHITE

1720—1793

Little did the Rev. Gilbert White think, when he settled at Selborne, Hampshire, and began to write letters to fellow naturalists that he was producing a classic, and earning the title of the Father of Field Naturalists. His "Selborne" was not written for publication. It is a straightforward statement of what this remarkable man, whose mind was scientific, observed.

It is cast in a series of letters addressed to two naturalists, as grave and patient as he—Thomas Pennant, and the Honourable Daines Barrington.

An old woman, who was eleven years of age when Gilbert White died, reported that "he was a quiet old gentleman, with very old-fashioned sayings."

Gilbert White's acute observations ranged beyond Selborne; but it is Selborne that he has made famous. The book grows upon one as one reads. The weight of his knowledge, his single-minded industry, build up an imposing picture. Gilbert White's "Selborne" seems as permanent as that "noble chalk promontory—Nore Hill."

45

From GILBERT WHITE'S "SELBORNE"

Letter XXII

To the Honourable Daines Barrington.

Selborne, Sept. 13, 1774.

Dear Sir,

By means of a straight cottage chimney I had an opportunity this summer of remarking, at my leisure, how swallows ascend and descend through the shaft; but my pleasure, in contemplating the address with which this feat was performed to a considerable depth in the chimney, was somewhat interrupted by apprehensions lest my eyes might undergo the same fate with those of Tobit.

Perhaps it may be some amusement to you to hear at what times the different species of *hirundines* arrived this spring in three very distant counties of this kingdom. With us the swallow was seen first on April the 4th, the swift on April the 24th, the bank-martin on April the 12th, and the house-martin not till April the 30th. At South Zele, Devonshire, swallows did not arrive till April the 25th; swifts, in plenty, on May the 1st; and house-martins not till the middle of May. At Blackburn, in Lancashire, swifts were seen April the 28th, swallows April the 29th, house-martins May the 1st. Do these different dates, in such distant districts, prove anything for or against migration? (Page 162).

"*The Natural History of Selborne.*" By Gilbert White. With an Introduction by Bertram C. A. Windle. *Everyman's Library*. Dent. 2s.

HENRY DAVID THOREAU

1817—1862

Thoreau, nature lover, distinguished American, friend of Emerson, and seer as well as sage, was, as Mr. Richard Whiteing observes, a man first and only after that a writer.

Let him explain his famous book. Here is the opening of the first chapter of "Walden" called "Economy."

"I lived alone in the woods, a mile from any neighbour, in a house which I had built myself, on the shore of Walden Pond, in Concord, Massachussetts, and earned my living by the labour of my hands only. I lived there two years and two months. At present I am a sojourner in civilized life again."

I have called Thoreau a sage. He was that because he realized that his soul-cure in the woods, by Walden pond, was but his period of meditation, of self-knowledge and that life remained to be lived.

He supported himself later by whitewashing, gardening, fence-building, land-surveying, and he wrote good books ; but "Walden" is the child of his love. By that he will live.

From THOREAU'S "WALDEN"

I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived. I did not wish to live what was not life, living is so dear ; nor did I wish to practice resignation, unless it was quite necessary. I wanted to live deep and suck out all the marrow of life, to live so sturdily and Spartan-like as to put to rout all that was not life, to cut a broad swath and shave close, to drive life into a corner, and reduce it to its lowest terms, and, if it proved to be mean, why then to get the whole and genuine meanness of it, and publish its meanness to the world ; or if it were sublime, to know it by experience, and be able to give a true account of it in my next excursion. (Page 109).

"Walden: or Life in the Woods." By Henry David Thoreau. With an Introduction by Richard Whiteing. The Wallet Library. Blackie. 1s. 6d.

47

HENRI FABRE

1823—1915

The slightest and humblest of naturalists must be charmed by the style of this book? What is the secret of the best French writers? Fabre, like Anatole France, like Daudet, like many other Frenchmen, had the gift of radiant simplicity. He writes as if he were talking to a lively and intelligent child: he says just what he means, and he is not afraid of being intimate.

He has told us in "My Work and Workshop," how he became drawn towards "the things of Nature," and how, against material difficulties, he indulged his passion.

He obtained a bit of land in the solitude of a little village. It was a harmas, a name given in Provence to an untilled, pebbly expanse where hardly any plant but thyme can grow; but it was the happy hunting ground of countless bees and wasps.

That was enough for Henri Fabre.

He won this harmas Eden after "forty years of desperate struggle."

From FABRE'S "BOOK OF INSECTS"

Before taking leave of this tiny animal (the Anthrax Fly), let us dwell for a moment on its marvellous instinct. Picture it as having just left the egg, just awakened to life under the fierce rays of the sun. The bare stone is its cradle ; there is no one to welcome it as it enters the world, a mere thread of half-solid substance. Instantly it starts on its struggle with the flint. Obstinate it sounds each pore of the stone ; it slips in, crawls on, retreats, begins again. What inspiration urges it towards its food, what compass guides it ? What does it know of those depths, or of what lies in them ? Nothing. What does the root of a plant know of the earth's fruitfulness ? Again, nothing. Yet both the root and the worm make for the nourishing spot. Why ? I do not understand. I do not even try to understand. The question is far above us. (Page 286).

48

W. H. HUDSON

1841—1922

The intelligent reader may find it profitable to compare the literary styles of those two intensive naturalists—Fabre and Hudson. The Frenchman trained himself to write : the Englishman was a born writer. Mr. Ford Madox Ford said somewhere, when recalling the days of his youth, " We wanted to write, I suppose, as only W. H. Hudson writes—as simply as the grass grows."

Hudson is immensely admired by writers who are not naturalists—Barrie, Galsworthy, etc.

Hudson was a remote, wandering, lonely man, here to-day, gone to-morrow. He has told us that he had no career—just a drifting along : that all the interesting part of his life stopped when he ceased to be a boy, that his autobiography ends at fifteen. His wonderful boyhood is told in his beautiful book " Far Away and Long Ago." His " Green Mansions " went into many editions.

Hudson wanted to call this collection of charming essays " The Book of a Field Naturalist."

A constant Observer ! A rare Writer ! A gentle Seer !

From HUDSON'S
"THE BOOK OF A NATURALIST"

It was when I began to find out the ways of wasps with other insects on which they nourish their young, that my pleasure in them became mixed with pain. For they did not, like spiders, ants, dragon flies, tiger-beetles, and other rapacious kinds, kill their prey at once, but paralysed it by stinging its nerve centres to make it incapable of resistance, and stored it in a closed cell, so that the grub to be hatched by and by should have fresh meat to feed on—not fresh killed but live meat.

Thus the old vexed question—How reconcile these facts with the idea of a beneficent Being who designed it all—did not come to me from reading, nor from teachers, since I had none, but was thrust upon me by nature itself. In spite, however, of its having come in that sharp way, I, like many another, succeeded in putting the painful question from me and keeping to the old traditions. The noise of the battle of Evolution, which had been going on for years, hardly reached me; it was but a faintly heard murmur, as of storms immeasurably far away "on alien shores." This could not last. (Pages 169, 170).

49

RICHARD JEFFERIES

1848—1887

A delightful writer. He was more than a keen observer of Nature : he wove heart and soul into his observations. But he was first and last an emotional nature man. The novels he wrote, now forgotten, I suppose, have been described as crude. " The Story of My Heart," that strange autobiography of his inner life, is included in the " Religion and Philosophy " Section. Other well-known books by him are " Wild Life in a Southern Country," " The Gamekeeper at Home," and " After London " or " Wild England " a curious romance of the future. The essays in " The Open Air " were contributed to various important journals.

Jefferies was a Wiltshire man. For twelve years he was on the staff of the " North Wilts. Herald." His letter to " The Times " in 1872, on the labourers of Wiltshire brought him into public notice. He died at Goring, in Sussex, after a long and painful illness.

From RICHARD JEFFERIES'
" THE OPEN AIR "

How fond Nature is of spot-markings ! The wings of butterflies, the feathers of birds, the surface of eggs, the leaves and petals of plants are constantly spotted ; so, too, fish—as trout. From the wing of the butterfly I looked involuntarily at the foxglove I had just gathered ; inside, the bells were thickly spotted—dots and dustings that might have been transferred to a butterfly's wing. The spotted meadow-orchis ; the brown dots on the cowslips ; brown, black, greenish, reddish dots and spots and dustings on the eggs of the finches, the whitethroats, and so many others—some of the spots seem as if they had been splashed on and had run into short streaks, some mottled, some gathered together at the end ; all spots, dots, dustings of minute specks, mottlings, and irregular markings. The histories, the stories, the library of knowledge contained in those signs . . .

The antiquity of Egypt is nothing to the age of these signs—they date from unfathomable time. In them the sun has written its commands, and the wind inscribed deep thought. . . .

The language in which they are written has no alphabet, and cannot be reduced to order. It can only be understood by the heart and spirit. (Pages 71, 72).

" *The Open Air.*" By Richard Jefferies. *The Wayfarers' Library.* Dent. 2s.

PART VI.
POETRY AND DRAMA.

50

HOMER

Flourished about 800 B.C.

Since names are necessary, the world has agreed to call the author of those mighty works the "Odyssey" and the "Iliad"—Homer, which means "One who puts together."

It is thought that he may have been the commanding genius of those Greek singers or rhapsodists who wandered from court to court, glorifying ancestral heroic deeds.

*"Seven wealthy towns contend for Homer dead,
Through which the living Homer begged his
bread."*

The "Odyssey," one of the immortal poems of the world, celebrates the ten years' wanderings of Odysseus (Ulysses) and his return to Ithaca, his native island.

The "Odyssey" and "Iliad" have been translated many times. Chapman's was made famous by Keats in his sonnet "On First Looking into Chapman's Homer."

Pope translated both the "Odyssey" and the "Iliad," in his neat way, and purchased the villa at Twickenham from the early profits of the "Iliad."

The world loves Homer for his humanity, homeliness, and his intimate descriptions of daily life, illumined by genius.

Andrew Lang praised Pope's "great translations."

From HOMER'S " ODYSSEY "

Whilst to his couch himself the prince address'd,
The duteous dame received the purple vest ;
The purple vest with decent care disposed,
The silver ring she pull'd, the door reclosed,
The bolt, obedient to the silken cord,
To the strong staple's inmost depth restored,
Secured the valves . . .

The honest herdsman rose, as this he said,
And drew before the hearth the stranger's bed ;
The fleecy spoils of sheep, a goat's rough hide
He spreads ; and adds a mantle thick and wide ;
With store to heap above him, and below,
And guard each quarter as the tempests blow,
There lay the king, and all the rest supine ;
All, but the careful master of the swine :
Forth hasted he to tend his bristly care ;
Well arm'd, and fenced against nocturnal air ;
His weighty falchion o'er his shoulder tied ;
His shaggy cloak a mountain goat supplied ;
With his broad spear, the dread of dogs and men,
He seeks his lodging in the rocky den . . .

(Pages 15, 233).

51

THEOCRITUS

Flourished about 300 B.C.

Idylls—little pictures of life: that was Theocritus. He lived in Syracuse, Cos and Alexandria, and his themes were episodes in the lives of herdsmen, shepherds, and fishermen.

Gilbert Murray wrote: "Theocritus is perhaps the most universally attractive of all Greek poets. It is common to find young students who prefer him to Homer. One might almost say that there is hardly anything beautiful in the pastoral poetry of the world that does not come from Theocritus."

Happily we may read gay Theocritus through the gaiety of Calverley, prince of parodists. Your true parodist gets near to the heart of the parodied.

Samuel Beane coupled Homer and Theocritus as the supreme types of majesty and beauty in Greek poetry. Virgil read Theocritus, and Calverley includes in this volume renderings of the "Eclogues."

Oscar Wilde addressed a haunting poem to Theocritus, beginning:

*O singer of Persephone!
In the dim meadows desolate
Dost thou remember Sicily?*

51

From "THE IDYLLS OF THEOCRITUS"

"Love Stealing Honey"

Once thievish Love the honeyed hives would rob,
When a bee stung him : soon he felt a throb
Through all his finger-tips, and, wild with pain,
Blew on his hands and stamped and jumped in vain.
To Aphrodite then he told his woe :

"How can a thing so tiny hurt one so ?"

She smiled and said : "Why thou'rt a tiny thing,
As is the bee ; yet sorely thou canst sting !"

From "The Serenade"

Did not Adonis rouse to such excess
Of frenzy her whose name is Loveliness,
(He a mere lad whose wethers grazed the hill)
That, dead, he's pillowed on her bosom still ? . . .

(Pages 110, 17).

52

VIRGIL

B.C. 70—B.C. 19

In spite of the fact that generations of schoolboys have worked desperately at "The Aeneid," as a school task, and have remembered little more than "Arms and the Man I sing," Virgil is a happiness to generations of adults. Recently at a picture gallery, I observed a Scholar, who is a friend, gazing with affection at a small water-colour. He said to me, "What a delightful Virgilian landscape." It was called, "Illuminated Script of Virgil's Georgics." My friend had eyes for nothing else.

What poetry-loving man of middle age has not intoned to himself dozens of times Tennyson's address to Virgil, "Written at the request of the Mantuans for the nineteenth centenary of Virgil's death."

Landscape-lover, lover of language . . .

I salute thee, Mantovano

I that loved thee since my day began,

*Wielder of the stateliest measure ever moulded by
the lips of man.*

We admire "The Aeneid," but we love "The Georgics" and "The Eclogues." In his last illness Virgil expressed a wish to burn "The Aeneid."

Virgil was tall and dark, shy and silent, unmarried, and of delicate health.

52

From VIRGIL'S
" AENEID " AND " GEORGICS "

Then, sacrifice done duly, one and all
Turn city-ward. The King, o'ercrept with age,
Moved onward, keeping ever at his side
Aeneas and his son, with various talk
Lightening the way. Aeneas on all around
Casts quick admiring eyes ; spot after spot
Enthralls him ; and with rapture he inquires
And learns the legends of the men of old . . .

From "Georgic IV."

So sang I of the tilth of furrowed fields,
Of flocks and trees, while Cæsar's majesty
Launched forth the levin-bolts of war by deep
Euphrates, and bare rule o'er willing folk
Though vanquished, and essayed the heights of
heaven.

I Virgil then, of sweet Parthenope
The nursling, wooed the flowery walks of peace
Inglorious, who erst trilled for shepherd-wights
The wanton ditty, and sang in saucy youth
Thee, Tityrus, 'neath the spreading beech tree's shade.
(Pages 188, 387).

53

HORACE

B.C. 65—B.C. 8

It was a Modern who wrote of Horace :

*“ Absorbed in half-a-hundred tiny arts,
Master of none.”*

Never mind. Horace would not have objected to being called The Perfect Dilettante. He knew himself, and in Odes, Satires and Epistles opened his rather worldly heart, and told us about—Horace, and Horace’s father, whom the son loved.

“ Tell the gossips,” this gay mundane writes, “ that I had the friendship of the world’s greatest men at home and abroad ; was little of stature, early grey, fond of the sunshine ; quick-tempered, but easily appeased.”

And he has told us of the farm given him by Maecenas among the Sabine hills, “ broken only by a shady valley ; not so shady, however, but that the rising sun can shine on its right slope, and the setting sun warm its left.”

He has told us, too, of his friend Virgil, and the countless numbers who love cheerful Horace, see him still rambling with Virgil among the Sabine hills.

What a pair ! What a picture !

Our first extract is by John Marshall “ in rhyme by way of variety,” which “ sums up fairly well Horace’s matured philosophy of conduct.”

53

From AN "EPISTLE" AND "ODE"
OF HORACE

Let but my house from sordid pinch be free,
Then small or big my bark—all's one to me.
I may not (winds being fair) spread sail so wide—
But, in a gale, less danger I abide ;
In strength, brains, looks, in virtue, wealth and place,
Last of the leaders, not last in the race.

Well you're not greedy? Good ! that's but one part;
Lurks then no other sin within your heart ?
Ambition, anger, fear of death—are these
Unknown ? Smile you at witchcraft's mysteries,
Ghosts, dreams, and portents ? Count you with
grateful heart

Your birthdays up, and take in kindly part
The faults of friends, each year the gentler growing ?
If not—why pluck *one* thorn, so many showing ?
Dolt in good deeds, make way for men of skill ;
You've had of sport and food and drink your fill.
'Tis time you went . . .

From "A Closing Song to His Muse"

I shall not wholly die. What's best of me
shall 'scape the tomb.

(Pages xxiii, xxiv, 90).

54

AUTHOR UNKNOWN

About A.D. 700

"The Song of Beowulf" is the oldest epic in English. Beowulf is the hero. The author is unknown, but he wears the mantle of an early English Homer.

The precious manuscript of this glorious poem is preserved in the British Museum. It deals with the heroic exploits of Danes and Geats in the South of Sweden and the Island of Seeland—in part our ancestors. When the Angles and Saxons came to England they brought their tales with them and from these legends wrote in English (a foreign language to moderns) "The Song of Beowulf."

Professor Gordon gives us an example of the way in which this 1200 years old poem is written—without rhyme, each line broken in the middle, and the two halves joined by alliteration, thus :

Sweord waes swātig ; secg weorce gefeh

(Sword was bloody ; the man in the work rejoiced),

So occasional verses in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle are framed.

There is colour, swing and simplicity in Professor Gordon's prose rendering of "The Song of Beowulf"—our first epic poem.

From " THE SONG OF BEOWULF "

Then at the fated hour Scyld, very brave, passed hence into the Lord's protection. Then did they, his dear comrades, bear him out to the shore of the sea, as he himself had besought them, whilst as friend of the Scyldings, loved lord of the land, he held sway with speech. There at the haven stood the ring-prowed ship radiant and ready, the chieftain's vessel. Then they laid down the loved lord, the bestowers of rings on the bosom of the barge, the famous man by the mast. Many treasures and ornaments were there, brought from afar. I never heard of a sightlier ship adorned with weapons of war and garments of battle, swords and corslets. Many treasures lay on his bosom that were to pass far with him into the power of the flood. No whit less did they furnish him with gifts, with great costly stores than did those who sent him forth in the beginning while he was still a child alone over the waves. Further, they set a golden banner high over his head ; they let the ocean bear him ; they surrendered him to the sea. (Page 14).

55

DANTE

1265—1321

This is Cary's translation. Ruskin stated that it is better to read ten lines of a poet in the original than ten cantos of a translation. He then proceeded to say that "an exception may be made in favour of Cary's 'Dante.'"

The "Vita Nuova," those exquisite love lyrics, is probably oftener read than the "Divina Commedia," which "is very much more than an account of his Vision of Hell, Purgatory and Paradise : it is almost a diary."

Probably the busy, unscholarly world knows little of this great poem save the Paolo and Francesca episode, and the immortal line "In His will is our peace"; but to read steadily through the terrible Inferno, the tender Purgatorio on to the beatific climax of the Paradiso is to have an overwhelming feeling of progress towards the light.

Browning said :

*Dante who loved well because he hated,
Hated wickedness that hinders loving.*

Mazzini said : "God created Dante and Italian literature together."

55

From "THE DIVINE COMEDY" OF
DANTE

One day

For our delight we read of Lancelot,
How him love thrall'd. Alone we were, and no
Suspicion near us. Oft-times by that reading
Our eyes were drawn together, and the hue
Fled from our alter'd cheek. But at one point
Alone we fell. When of that smile we read,
The wished smile so rapturously kiss'd
By one so deep in love, then he, who ne'er
From me shall separate, at once my lips
All trembling kiss'd. The book and writer both
Were love's purveyors. In its leaves that day
We read no more . . .

We climb'd, he first, I followed his steps,
Till on our view the beautiful lights of Heaven
Dawn'd through a circular opening in the cave :
Thence issuing we again beheld the stars . . .

Here vigour fail'd the towering fantasy :
But yet the will roll'd onward, like a wheel,
In even motion, by the love impell'd,
That moves the sun in heaven and all the stars.

(Pages 25, 26, 167, 498).

56

CHAUCER

C. 1340—C. 1400

Chaucer is the father of English Poetry. He shaped our tongue. In his youth French was still the legal language in England. Tennyson sang :

*Dan Chaucer, the first warbler, whose sweet breath
Preluded those melodious bursts that fill
The spacious times of great Elizabeth
With sounds that echo still.*

"The Canterbury Tales"—twenty-four in number—narrate the famous pilgrimage from Southwark to Canterbury :

*The holy blissful martir for to seeke,
That them hath holpen when that they were weeke.*

This edition is not meant for the Chaucer scholar, but "for those many people who have not read, who say they cannot read, Chaucer." So the spelling has been modernized, and the vocabulary simplified. Therefore every man can enjoy the humour, narrative power, gusto and jollity of the Father of English Poetry, who was deeply impressed by Dante.

Chaucer was buried in Westminster Abbey. The place of his tomb came to be known in after years as Poets' Corner.

56

From

CHAUCER'S "CANTERBURY TALES"

When that Aprille with his showres swoot
The drought of Marche hath percèd to the root,
And bathèd every veyn in suche licoúr,
From which vertu engendred is the flour ;
When Zephirus eek with his swete breeth
Enspired hath in every holte and heeth
The tendre croppes, and the yonge sonne
Hath in the Ram his halfe course runne,
And smale fowles maken melodie,
That slepen al the night with open eye,
So pricketh them natúre in their coráges :—
Thenne longen folk to go on pilgrimáges,
And palmers for to seeken strange strandes,
To distant seintes, known in sondry landes ;
And specially, from every shires ende
Of Engelond, to Canterbury they wende,
The holy blisful martir for to seeke,
That them hath holpen when that they were weeke.

(Page 1).

57

EDMUND SPENSER

C. 1552—1599

He has been called—great title—"The Poets' Poet." Whoever scans the long and lovely "Faerie Queene" or reads the "Amoretti" or the "Prothalamion," or anything almost from the golden pen of Edmund Spenser can understand why he has been named "The Poets' Poet."

Born twelve years before Shakespeare, inventor of the Spenserian stanza, he had rather an adventurous political life for a poet.

This man, this poets' poet, who gave so much loveliness to the world, returned from Ireland to London early in 1599—"homeless, destitute, exhausted." Soon he died at an inn in King Street, Westminster, in

" . . . Merry London, my most kindly nurse."

He was buried in Poets' Corner, Westminster Abbey. Here is his Epitaph :

Edmond Spenser, the Prince of Poets in his Tyme, whose Divine Spirit needs noe othir witnesse than the works which he left behinde him.

"Sweet Thames! run softly, till I end my song."

57

From SPENSER'S "AMORETTI"

One day I wrote her name upon the strand,
But came the waves and washèd it away :
Again I wrote it with a second hand ;
But came the tide, and made my pains his prey.
" Vain man," said she, " that dost in vain assay
A mortal thing so to immortalise ;
For I myself shall like to this decay,
And eke my name be wipèd out likewise."
" Not so," quoth I ; " let baser things devise
To die in dust, but you shall live by fame :
My verse your virtues rare shall eternise,
And in the heavens write your glorious name ;
Where, whenas death shall all the world subdue,
Our love shall live, and later life renew."
(Page 48).

CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE

1564—1593

Marlowe was born the same year as Shakespeare, whom he influenced. This wonderful youth died at 29. But his "mighty line" and the "tremendous English music" of his blank verse had opened the door to a new English drama—and to Shakespeare.

It was long said that Marlowe was wild and dissolute, and that he died in a drunken brawl at Deptford. But recent researches have shown that he was more sinned against than sinning in that Deptford row. His wildness, his atheistical opinions, his blasphemies, were probably nothing more than the high spirits and intellectual daring of youth and genius.

He was the son of a Canterbury shoemaker: he was educated at King's School, Canterbury, and at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge. Readers of Swinburne's description of Kit Marlowe coming to London after Cambridge, cannot forget that glorious rhetoric, nor Drayton's

*Marlowe bathed in the Thespian Springs,
Had in him those brave, translunary things
That the first poets had.*

From MARLOWE'S " DR. FAUSTUS "

(Re-enter HELEN.)

FAUST. Was this the face that launch'd a thousand ships,
And burnt the topless towers of Ilium ?—
Sweet Helen, make me immortal with a kiss.—

(Kisses her.

Her lips suck forth my soul ; see, where it flies !—

Come, Helen, come, give me my soul again,
Here will I dwell, for heaven is in these lips,
And all is dross that is not Helena.

I will be Paris, and for love of thee,
Instead of Troy, shall Wertenberg be sack'd ;
And I will combat with weak Menelaus,
And wear thy colours on my plumed crest ;
Yes, I will wound Achilles in the heel,
And then return to Helen for a kiss.

O, Thou art fairer than the evening air
Clad in the beauty of a thousand stars
Brighter art thou than flaming Jupiter
When he appear'd to hapless Semele ;
More lovely than the monarch of the sky
In wanton Arethusa's azur'd arms ;
And none but thou shall be my paramour !

(Pages 154, 155).

59

SHAKESPEARE

1564—1616

He who has longed for a handy Shakespeare—one that can be slipped into the pocket when taking a journey, will find it in this edition of three volumes : I, The Comedies ; II, The Histories and Poems ; III, The Tragedies

George Steevens (1736–1800) said the naked thing about the life of Shakespeare : “ All we know with any degree of certainty is that he was born at Stratford-upon-Avon, married and had children there ; went to London where he commenced as actor, and wrote poems and plays ; returned to Stratford, made his will, died, and was buried.”

Ben Jonson rolled out in his “ To the Memory of my beloved Mr. Wm. Shakespeare ”

He was not of an age, but for all Time . . .

Sweet son of Avon . . .

Thackeray, writing intimately, as was his way, whispered, “ I should like to have been Shakespeare’s shoe-black—just to have lived in his house, just to have worshipped him—to have run on his errands, and seen that sweet, serene face.”

Matthew Arnold—to end on a high note—said, “ Others abide our question. Thou art free. We ask and ask.—Thou smilest and art still, out-topping knowledge.”

59

From SHAKESPEARE'S "TEMPEST"

Be cheerful, sir,
Our revels now are ended. These our actors,
As I foretold you, were all spirits, and
Are melted into air, into thin air ;
And, like the baseless fabric of this vision
The cloud-capp'd towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve,
And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff
As dreams are made on ; and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep.

From RICHARD II

Even through the hollow eyes of death
I spy life peering.

(Vol. I, page 47 ; Vol. II, page 84).

60

ROBERT HERRICK

1591—1674

Herrick wrote more than 1200 poems—dainty, exquisite and merrily frank. Who surpasses him in neatness of lyrical beauty? Some people have wondered that a clergyman should have been such an amatory singer. Herrick was a poet by instinct, a clergyman—by chance. I know nothing about his performances as a clergyman. I know and love his performances as a poet—slight if you will—but lovely.

He came down from Cambridge to sit gladly at the feet of Ben Jonson—a great time, a roystering time of lyric feasts. Ben Jonson schooled him and he wrote five poems to Ben, perhaps

*“ Made at the Sun,
The Dog, the Triple Tun.”*

The feasts of wit, the fun, stopped when he was presented to the living of Dean Prior in Devonshire ; but it was in his banishment to the “ loathed west ” that he wrote his best things.

In early life he was apprenticed to a goldsmith which may account, in part, for the jewel-like chiselling of his lyrics.

60

From HERRICK'S " HESPERIDES "

THE ARGUMENT OF HIS BOOK

I sing of Brooks, of Blossoms, Birds and Bowers ;
Of April, May, of June, and July Flowers.
I sing of May-poles, Hock-carts, Wassails, Wakes,
Of Bride-grooms, Brides, and of their Bridall-cakes.
I write of Youth, of Love, and have Accesses
By these, to sing of cleanly-Wantonnesse.
I sing of Dewes, of Raines, and piece by piece
Of Balme, of Oyle, of Spice, and Amber-Greece.
I sing of Times trans-shifting ; and I write
How Roses first came Red, and Lillies White.
I write of Groves, of Twilights, and I sing
The Court of Mab, and of the Fairie-King.
I write of Hell ; I sing (and ever shall)
Of Heaven, and hope to have it after all.

From "To the Virgins, To Make Much of Time."

Gather ye Rose-buds while ye may,
Old Time is still a-flying :
And this same flower that smiles to-day,
To-morrow will be dying.

(Pages 1, 91).

61

JOHN MILTON

1608—1674

Milton had no fear. He said gravely and formidably what he meant. Listen to the opening of his statement about "The Verse" of "Paradise Lost." "The measure is English heroic verse, without rime, as that of Homer in Greek, and of Virgil in Latin—rime being no necessary adjunct or true ornament of poem or good verse . . .

There is nothing new to be said about Milton's sublime harmonics and golden words : so let his great admirers speak :

Charles Lamb said, "Milton almost requires a solemn service of music to be played before you enter upon him."

Wordsworth said,

"That mighty orb of song,

The divine Milton."

Tennyson said,

"O mighty-mouth'd inventor of harmonies,

O skill'd to sing of Time or Eternity,

God-gifted organ-voice of England,

Milton, a name to resound for ages."

Milton's first wife left him after a month ; but that did not deter him from marrying again twice.

His blindness produced perhaps his greatest sonnet.

61

From MILTON'S "PARADISE LOST"

THE BEGINNING

Of Man's first disobedience, and the fruit
Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste
Brought death into the world, and all our woe,
With loss of Eden, till one greater Man
Restore us, and regain the blissful seat,
Sing, Heavenly Muse, that on the secret top
Of Oreb, or of Sinai, didst inspire
That shepherd who first taught the chosen seed
In the beginning how the heavens and earth
Rose out of Chaos ; or, if Sion hill
Delight thee more, and Siloa's brook that flowed
Fast by the oracle of God, I thence
Invoke thy aid to my adventurous song,
That with no middle flight intends to soar
Above th' Aonian mount, while it pursues
Things unattempted yet in prose or rime.

THE END

The world was all before them, where to choose
Their place of rest, and Providence their guide :
They, hand in hand, with wandering steps and slow,
Through Eden took their solitary way.

(Pages 114, 386).

"The English Poems of John Milton." From the Edition of the late H. C. Beeching.
The World's Classics. Oxford University Press. 2s.

62

ROBERT BURNS

1759—1796

Do you remember the Dedication by Burns to the Edinburgh edition of his Poems. Here is a passage, "The Poetic Genius of my Country found me as the prophetic bard Elijah did Elisha—at the plough; and threw her inspiring mantle over me. She bade me sing the loves, the joys, the rural scenes and pleasures of my native soil, in my native tongue: I tuned my wild, artless notes, as she inspired."

That Burns did to the everlasting joy of Scotsmen and others all the world over.

Poets have not always agreed about Burns. Tennyson considered his serious poems "stupid," but praised his "exquisite songs." Wordsworth admired the serious poems, but "Those foolish little amatory songs one has to forget."

The world refuses to forget the foolish little amatory songs. They have wound themselves into innumerable hearts.

"O whistle, and I'll come to you, my lad."

Critics are in doubt about the origin of "Auld Lang Syne."

62

From ROBERT BURNS'
"AULD LANG SYNE"

Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
And never brought to mind ?
Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
And auld lang syne ?
For auld lang syne, my dear,
For auld lang syne,
We'll tak a cup o' kindness yet
For auld lang syne !

We twa hae run about the braes
And pou'd the gowans fine ;
But we've wandered mony a weary fit,
Sin auld lang syne.

We twa hae paidl'd in the burn
Frae morning sun till dine ;
But seas between us braid hae roar'd
Sin auld lang syne.

And there's a hand, my trusty fere !
And gie's a hand o' thine !
And we'll tak' a right guid-willie waught,
For auld lang syne.

(Pages 134, 135).

63

WORDSWORTH

1770—1850

Let a modern poet—William Watson—sum up the debt of the modern world to Wordsworth.

*“ From Shelley’s dazzling glow or thunderous haze,
From Byron’s tempest-anger, tempest-mirth,
Men turned to thee and found—not blast and blaze,
Tumult of tottering heavens, but peace on earth.”*

Peace—yes! Joy and consolation—yes! but in the view of some also prosiness and prolixity.

John Wilson in “ Noctes Ambrosianæ ” had some fun with Wordsworth’s “ Excursion,” claiming that it is “ the worst poem, of any character, in the English language ”; but what a giant loss if “ The Excursion ” were removed from the annals of poetry. Or “ The Prelude ”—that conduit of spiritual food to so many.

The danger of the search for simplicity is that it may drop into baldness, may lead to trivialities. If Wordsworth sometimes did this—that is the worst that can be said about him. He points to peace: he shows us peace.

*“ Too fast we live, too much are tried,
Too harass’d, to attain
Wordsworth’s sweet calm.”*

That calm awaits the seeker in these two volumes.

From WORDSWORTH'S "POEMS"

I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils ;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle in the milky way,
They stretched in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay :
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced ; but they
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee :
A poet could not be but gay,
In such a jocund company :
I gazed—and gazed—but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought :

For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude ;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

(Vol. I, Pages 176, 177).

64

SHELLEY

1792—1822

In the Preface to "Adonais"—an Elegy on the Death of John Keats—from which our extract is taken, Shelley wrote :

"John Keats died at Rome of a consumption, in his twenty-fifth year, and was buried in the romantic and lonely cemetery of the Protestants in that city . . . The cemetery is an open place among the ruins, covered in winter with violets and daisies. It might make one in love with death, to think that one should be buried in so sweet a place . . ."

Shelley lived five years longer than Keats—to the age of thirty. He was drowned, as the world knows, off the Italian coast, near Leghorn.

Shelley and Keats ! Pure Poetry ! Essential Poetry !

John Morley wrote, "The most truly spiritual of all English poets, Shelley."

Ruskin wrote, "Shelley, with due admiration for his genius, is entirely mischievous."

*"Peace, peace ! he is not dead, he doth not sleep—
He hath awakened from the dream of life . . ."*

From SHELLEY'S "ADONAI'S"

All he had loved, and moulded into thought,
From shape, and hue, and odour, and sweet sound,
Lamented Adonais . . .

He has outsoared the shadow of our night ;
Envy and calumny and hate and pain,
And that unrest which men miscall delight,
Can touch him not and torture not again ;
From the contagion of the world's slow stain
He is secure . . .

He is made one with Nature : there is heard
His voice in all her music, from the moan
Of thunder, to the song of night's sweet bird ;
He is a presence to be felt and known
In darkness and in light, from herb and stone,
Spreading itself where'er that Power may move
Which has withdrawn his being to its own ;
Which wields the world with never-wearied love,
Sustains it from beneath, and kindles it above.

He is portion of the loveliness
Which once he made more lovely . . .

(Pages 320, 327, 328).

65

JOHN KEATS

1795—1821

J. R. Lowell wrote : " Keats was a rare and great genius. He had, I think, the finest and richest fancy that has been since Shakespeare, and his imagination gave promise of an equal development. Ought we to sorrow for his early death, or to be glad that we have in his works an eternal dawn of poesy, as in Shakespeare we have early morning and full day ? "

Byron wrote :

" Who kill'd John Keats ?

*" I," says the Quarterly,
So savage and Tartarly ;*

" 'Twas one of my feats."

But it was consumption, not the " Quarterly Review," that killed John Keats.

He was the son of a livery stableman in Moorfields, London : he was apprenticed to a surgeon ; he heard the nightingale in Well Walk, Hampstead : he died in Rome : he lives because—

*" A thing of beauty is a joy for ever :
Its loveliness increases ; it will never
Pass into nothingness . . ."*

From KEATS' "ENDYMION"

A thing of beauty is a joy for ever ;
Its loveliness increases ; it will never
Pass into nothingness ; but still will keep
A bower quiet for us, and a sleep
Full of sweet dreams, and health, and quiet breathing.
Therefore, on every morrow, are we wreathing
A flowery band to bind us to the earth,
Spite of despondence, of the inhuman dearth
Of noble natures, of the gloomy days,
Of all the unhealthy and o'er-darken'd ways
Made for our searching : yes, in spite of all,
Some shape of beauty moves away the pall
From our dark spirits. Such the sun, the moon,
Trees old and young, sprouting a shady boon
For simple sheep ; and such are daffodils
With the green world they live in ; and clear rills
That for themselves a cooling covert make
'Gainst the hot season ; the mid-forest brake,
Rich with a sprinkling of fair musk-rose blooms :
And such too is the grandeur of the dooms
We have imagined for the mighty dead ;
All lovely tales that we have heard or read :
An endless fountain of immortal drink,
Pouring unto us from the heaven's brink.

(Page 71).

66

TENNYSON

1809—1892

*" There lies a vale in Ida, loulier
Than all the valleys of Ionian hills."*

How the " enchanted reverie " of Tennyson lingers in the hearts of those who lived through Victorian days when Tennyson was the great figure in poetry. Browning was for the cultured, Tennyson was for the mass. Victorians were brought up on his golden lines: he expressed for them the prevalent sentiment, the prevalent doubt, and the prevalent awe of science. And he wrote " Maud " and the " Idylls of the King " and " In Memoriam," and the " Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington."

He was the picturesque Bard of the quiet motor-less Victorian years. Browning was a trim diner-out in correct dress: Tennyson was the gruff aloof poet in sombrero and cape.

They tell me that the young generations of to-day have outgrown him; but he is as fixed as the Queen Victoria Memorial before Buckingham Palace. Tennyson and Browning remain giants.

From TENNYSON'S " ODE ON THE DEATH
OF THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON "

All is over and done :
Render thanks to the Giver,
England, for thy son.
Let the bell be toll'd.
Render thanks to the Giver,
And render him to the mould.
Under the cross of gold
That shines over city and river,
There he shall rest for ever
Among the wise and the bold . . .

He is gone who seem'd so great—
Gone ; but nothing can bereave him
Of the force he made his own
Being here, and we believe him
Something far advanced in State,
And that he wears a truer crown
Than any wreath that man can weave him.
Speak no more of his renown,
Lay your earthly fancies down,
And in the vast cathedral leave him.
God accept him, Christ receive him.

(Pages 193, 198, 199.)

67

ROBERT BROWNING

1812—1889

Robert Browning was born in Camberwell, then an agreeable suburb, with tree-shaded lawns. He was educated at Peckham, and at University College; he wrote "Pauline" before he was twenty.

In 1856 William Morris said, "It is a bitter thing to me to see the way in which he has been received by almost everybody."

That was in 1856, but as Morris lived to 1896 he had the joy of seeing Browning work his splendid way into the brains and hearts of all Poetry lovers; he saw, too, the rise and spread of the Browning Societies.

Lovers learned his love poems, preachers founded sermons on his invincible optimism: he was hailed as the notable poet of his day, and he was buried in Westminster Abbey.

The story of his marriage to Elizabeth Barrett—that perfect marriage of poets—moved all hearts, and this great man, great lover, and author of "The Ring and the Book" and other immortal poems, permitted himself, and was glad, to write of his wife, "She has genius. I am only a painstaking fellow."

From BROWNING'S "SAUL"

I have gone the whole round of Creation : I saw
and I spoke !

I, a work of God's hand for that purpose, received in
my brain

And pronounced on the rest of his handwork—
returned him again

His creation's approval or censure : I spoke as I saw.

I report, as a man may of God's work—all's love,
yet all's law !

Now I lay down the judgeship he lent me. Each
faculty tasked

To perceive him, has gained an abyss, where a
dewdrop was asked.

Have I knowledge ? confounded it shrivels at wisdom
laid bare.

Have I forethought ? how purblind, how blank,
to the Infinite care !

Do I task any faculty highest, to image success ?

I but open my eyes—and perfection, no more and
no less,

In the kind I imagined, full-fronts me, and God is
seen God

In the star, in the stone, in the flesh, in the soul
and the clod. . . .

(Vol. II, Page 409).

68

WALT WHITMAN

1819—1892

Someone called Walt Whitman a Prophet, not a Poet. What is poetry? To discuss this would be to re-open the interminable arguments about Free Verse—Is it Poetry? At any rate Walt Whitman was the chief founder of Free Verse, and the greatest practitioner of rhymeless rhythms. It is whispered that many Americans looked askance at Walt Whitman when his "Leaves of Grass" first appeared. To-day America is flooded with Free Verse: so the Good Grey Poet has come into his own.

The youth of England received "Leaves of Grass" gladly, seeing in this uncouth, loving-hearted singer a vigorous, racial poet owing nothing to Europe. Tramping, singing, he went, earning his living anyhow, and one day he made this address: "To Foreign Lands"—

*"I heard that you ask'd for something to prove this
puzzle the New World,
And to define America, her athletic democracy,
Therefore I send you my poems that you behold in
them what you wanted."*

*Walt Whitman is not all America; but surely he is
Young America.*

"Pioneers! O pioneers!"

From WALT WHITMAN'S
"LEAVES OF GRASS"

There was a child went forth every day,
And the first object he look'd upon, that object he
became,
And that object became part of him for the day or
a certain part of the day,
Or for many years or stretching cycles of years.

The early lilacs became part of this child,
And grass and white and red morning-glories, and
white and red clover, and the song of the phœbe-
bird,
And the Third-month lambs and the sow's pink-faint
litter, and the mare's foal and the cow's calf,
And the noisy brood of the barnyard or by the mire
of the pond-side,
And the fish suspending themselves so curiously
below there, and the beautiful curious liquid,
And the water-plants with their graceful flat heads,
all became part of him . . .

These became part of that child who went forth every
day, and who now goes, and will always go forth
every day.

(Pages 283, 285).

PART VII.
RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY.

VARIOUS AUTHORS

Before 800 B.C. and onward

These four volumes contain The Old Testament (and The Apocrypha) in a novel and interesting form.

The Rev. R. Bruce Taylor, who writes the Introduction, tells us that the first intention of the publishers was to have the books arranged in chronological order. This was found to be impossible, as the Old Testament contains a whole national literature, extending over a period of nearly a thousand years, and some of the books date from periods centuries apart.

So the " topical " arrangement was adopted : the books are grouped according to topics.

The Apocryphal books have been mingled with the Canonical writings : the text is that of King James's version.

Divisions into chapters and verses have been abolished ; quotation marks are used ; and the poetical books are printed as poetry.

So here we have King James's version unchanged, but rearranged. Familiar passages take on a new alluring solemnity.

From "ISAIAH" and the "APOCRYPHA"

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing : for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water : in the habitation of jackals, where each lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes. And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness ; the unclean shall not pass over it ; but it shall be for those : the wayfaring men, yea fools, shall not go astray therein. No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there ; but the redeemed shall walk there ; and the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads : they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away . . .

From the "APOCRYPHA"

Their bodies are buried in peace ;
But their name liveth for evermore.

(Vol. III, Page 71. Vol. IV, Page 202).

"Ancient Hebrew Literature. Being the Old Testament and Apocrypha." Arranged by the Rev. R. Bruce Taylor. Everyman's Library. Dent. 4 Vols. 2s. each.

70

PLATO

Circa 427 B.C.—347 B.C.

Those unversed in Greek, those to whom the names of Plato and Socrates are but remote reiterations, will find in Plato's "Dialogues" a revelation: they will find that subjects they may themselves have been pondering and talking over—eternal subjects—are here discussed by the great intellect of Plato in a way that all may understand. His style is radiantly clear: it leads us winningly into his profound thought. Some may discover his "delicious irony."

Wondering at Socrates, Plato's master, who appears as the chief character in the "Dialogues," they may recall Byron's question and answer, "What made Socrates the greatest of men? His moral truth—his ethics."

In Volume II there is another view of Socrates by that "bluff truth-telling soldier," Xenophon.

Volume III contains "The Republic" of Plato, which Dr. Garnett places among "the epoch-making books of the world."

It was Coleridge who said, "Every man is born an Aristotelian, or a Platonist. I am sure no born Platonist can ever change into an Aristotelian."

From PLATO'S " APOLOGY "

(Socrates after the Sentence of Death)

Death must be one of two things : either it is to have no consciousness at all of anything whatever, or else, as some say, it is a kind of change and migration of the soul from this world to another. Now if there is no consciousness at all, and it is like sleep when the sleeper does not dream, I say there would be a wonderful gain in death. For I am sure if any man were to take that night in which he slept so deeply that he saw no dreams, and put beside it all the other nights and days of his whole life, and compare them, and say how many of them all were better spent or happier than that one night—I am sure that not the ordinary man alone, but the King of Persia himself, would find them few to count. If death is of this nature I would consider it a gain ; for the whole of time would seem no longer than one single night. But if it is a journey to another land, if what some say is true and all the dead are really there, if this is so, my judges, what greater good could there be ? . . .

But now it is time for us to go, I to death, and you to life ; and which of us goes to the better state is known to none but God. (Vol. II, pages 348, 349).

Vol. I. " Five Dialogues of Plato bearing on Poetic Inspiration." With an Introduction by A. D. Lindsay. Vol. II, " Socratic Discourses by Plato and Xenophon." With an Introduction by A. D. Lindsay. Vol. III, " The Republic of Plato." With an Introduction by Richard Garnett. Everyman's Library. Dent. 3 Vols., 2s. each.

71

VARIOUS AUTHORS

Circa 48 A.D.—circa 93 A.D.

The arrangement of this edition of "The New Testament" is chronological: it begins with Paul's Epistles to the Thessalonians, circa 48 A.D.: it ends with the Second Epistle of Peter, circa 93 A.D.

Principal Lindsay tells us in the Preface that he has long found it necessary, in studying the beginnings of the Christian religion, to attempt to arrange the writings of the New Testament, as far as possible, in the order of their appearance.

The New Testament contains twenty-seven separate writings by at least ten different authors. The chronological arrangement, we are told, assists our sympathy with the first readers of the New Testament.

Divisions into chapters and verses have been abandoned. The text is that of King James's version.

Italics have been used to denote quotations from the Old Testament, etc.

The sayings of Jesus Christ are printed in shorter lines.

As in the rearrangement of the Old Testament, we find familiar passages taking on a new alluring solemnity.

71

From "THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES"

Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars' hill, and said :—" Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are very religious. For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription :

TO THE UNKNOWN GOD.

Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, Him declare I unto you. God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that He is Lord of Heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands ; neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though He needed anything, seeing He giveth to all life, and breath, and all things ; and hath made of one blood all nations of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation : that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after Him and find Him, though He be not far from every one of us : for in Him we live, and move, and have our being ; as certain also of your own poets have said,
For we are also His offspring."

(Pages 455, 456).

72

MARCUS AURELIUS

A.D. 121—180

In lists of "Bedside Books" the "Thoughts (or Meditations) of Marcus Aurelius" is always included. But he who uses this noble little volume as a gentle soporific must be content with its gracious wisdom: he must not ask his midnight brains to explain how it happened that this Imperial Pagan Philosopher had (what we call) so 'Christian a heart, or why he persecuted the Christians. These questions have been voluminously answered. He was not only the best of the Roman Emperors, but also that rare creation a good man—inherently good. Such as he are beacons and independent of earthly labels.

There are few books that have had such a potent charm over so many hearts as the sad "Meditations" of "Aurelius."

Matthew Arnold wrote an "Essay" upon Marcus Aurelius, the end of which rests in many memories—"We see him wise, just, self-governed, tender, thankful, blameless; yet, with all this, agitated, stretching out his arms for something beyond. . . ."

From "THE THOUGHTS OF MARCUS AURELIUS"

As thy thoughts are so will thy mind be also : for the soul takes its colouring from thought. Then dye it deep with a monochrome of such reflections as these : "Where life is possible, there virtuous life is possible : therefore, as life may exist in a palace, so may virtue also." And again : "For whatever purpose anything has been designed, towards this purpose it moves : and whithersoever it moves, there must its end lie ; and where the end is, there must its Good, utilitarian and absolute, be also. . . ."

O my soul, my soul ! wilt thou never attain to goodness and simplicity, oneness and nakedness, and shine through the bars of thy bodily prison ? . . .

What an infinitely little part of the endless, unbroken tract of time has been allotted each of us ! What a trifling section of the universal substance and the universal soul ! And what a tiny clod of the whole earth is the space whereon thou creepest ! Think of all this and deem nothing great, save to do whatsoever the nature of thyself prescribes, and to suffer whatsoever the nature of the Whole brings thee . . .

(Pages 40, 91, 120, 121).

73

ST. AUGUSTINE

353—430

St. Augustine, "the greatest of the Latin Fathers," and according to authority "one of the greatest intellects," was a Sensitive, a self-questioner, and supreme at introspection. Being absolutely sincere and unafraid he, in writing the "Confessions," made one of the world's great Autobiographies, beautiful and moving, yet pathetic to the many moderns who have ceased to be anxious about much that greatly troubled Augustine. But we are with him, we bow to him when he describes the nature of God as a circle whose centre is everywhere, and circumference nowhere.

Yet—such is the heart of man—do we not dwell oftenest, as do poets and painters, on his adored mother, Monica, from whom he parts in the ninth book of "The Confessions." Who does not know Matthew Arnold's "Monica's Last Prayer," and that last passage :

*"Creeds pass, rites change, no altar standeth whole
Yet we her memory, as she pray'd, will keep,
Keep by this : Life in God, and union there !"*

73

From "THE CONFESSIONS OF
ST. AUGUSTINE"

We were saying then : If to any the tumult of the flesh were hushed, hushed the images of earth, and waters, and air, hushed also the poles of heaven, yea the very soul be hushed to herself, and by not thinking on self surmount self, hushed all dreams and imaginary revelations, every tongue and every sign, and whatsoever exists only in transition, since if any could hear, all these say, We made not ourselves, but He made us that abideth for ever—If then having uttered this, they, too, should be hushed, having roused only our ears to Him who made them, and He alone speak, not by them, but by Himself, that we may hear His word, not through any tongue of flesh, nor Angel's voice, nor sound of thunder, nor in the dark riddle of a similitude, but might hear Whom in these things we love, might hear His Very Self without these (as we two now strained ourselves, and in swift thought touched on that Eternal Wisdom, which abideth over all) ; could this be continued on, and other visions of kind far unlike be withdrawn, and this one ravish and absorb, and wrap up its beholder amid these inward joys, so that life might be for ever like that one moment of understanding which now we sighed after ; were not this, Enter into thy Master's joy ?

(Page 241).

"The Confessions of St. Augustine." Edited by the Rev. E. B. Pusey. Introduction by the Very Rev. H. C. Beeching. The Wallet Library. Blackie. 1s. 6d.

SIR THOMAS MORE

1478—1535

Here are two extracts ! The first is from an " Encyclopædia " : " Sir Thomas More was executed on Tower Hill." The second is from Macaulay : " Sir Thomas More is one of the choice specimens of human wisdom and Virtue."

No wonder " Catholic Europe was shocked by the news of his execution " : no wonder we of the 20th century, thinking of his noble, gory head exhibited on London Bridge, can hardly believe that such wickedness could ever have been possible.

We recall Sir Thomas More as the friend of Erasmus and Holbein, as a light of his days, as the author of " Utopia," as a scholar and a humanitarian—then that gory head cuts into our meditations. Can such things have been ?

The " Utopia," inspired by Plato's " Republic," was written in Latin in 1516, and translated into English in 1556. More's imaginary Island added a new word to the language—Utopian. In his rather cross Preface to this Edition, Mr. H. G. Wells says, " There will always be found people to read ' Utopia,' over and above the countless multitudes who will continue ignorantly to use its name for everything most alien to More's essential quality."

From MORE'S "UTOPIA"
(Of the Religions in Utopia)

There be divers kinds of religion not only in sundry parts of the Island, but also in divers places of every city. Some worship for God the sun : some the moon : some, some other of the planets. There be that give worship to a man that was once of excellent virtue or of famous glory, not only as God, but also as the chiefest and highest God. But the most and the wisest part (rejecting all these) believe that there is a certain Godly power unknown, everlasting, incomprehensible, inexplicable, far above the capacity and reach of man's wit, dispersed throughout all the world, not in bigness, but in virtue and power. Him they call the father of all. . . .

No prayers be used but such as every man may boldly pronounce without the offending of any sect. They come, therefore, to the church, the last day of every month and year, in the evening yet fasting, there to give thanks to God for that they have prosperously passed over the year or month, whereof that holy day is the last day. The next day they come to the church early in the morning, to pray to God that they may have good fortune and success all the new year or month which they do begin of that same holy day.

(Pages 177, 192).

75

SIR THOMAS BROWNE

1605—1682

The strange thing is that the "Religio Medici" was written before the author was thirty. It is a book of profound meditations, deep erudition, and lively speculations. When Browne wanted a word he coined it from the Latin : he believed just what he wanted to believe, including the existence of witches. "Religio Medici" is not all plain sailing. Browne had irony, and the modern reader may sometimes surmise that this learned physician is politely and pedagogically pulling the leg of posterity. How did he treat his patients? Did his talk hasten their health?

Coleridge said of him, "A library was a living world to him, and every book a man, absolute flesh and blood!"

"Religio Medici" lives because of the music and majesty of its style. The modern man might murmur, "Saying my prayers at night does me good." Sir Thomas Browne puts it thus, "This is the dormitive I take to bedward; I need no other laudanum than this to make me sleep; after which, I close mine eyes in security, content to take my leave of the sun, and sleep unto the resurrection." So he wrote—splendidly. That is why we read Sir Thomas Browne.

From BROWNE'S "RELIGIO MEDICI"

I desire to exercise my faith in the difficultest point ; for to credit ordinary and visible objects, is not faith, but persuasion. Some believe the better for seeing Christ's sepulchre ; and when they have seen the Red Sea, doubt not of the miracle. Now, contrarily, I bless myself, and am thankful that I lived not in the days of miracles ; that I never saw Christ nor his disciples. I would not have been one of those Israelites that passed the Red Sea, nor one of Christ's patients on whom he wrought his wonders : then had my faith been thrust upon me ; nor should I enjoy that greater blessing pronounced to all that believe and saw not. . . .

How shall the dead arise is no question of my faith ; to believe only possibilities is not faith, but mere philosophy. Many things are true in divinity, which are neither inducible by reason, nor confirmable by sense ; and many things in philosophy confirmable by sense, yet not inducible by reason. Thus it is impossible, by any solid or demonstrative reasons, to persuade a man to believe the conversion of the needle to the north ; though this be possible and true, and easily credible, upon a single experiment unto the sense. I believe that our estranged and divided ashes shall unite again . . .

(Pages 21, 22, 78, 79).

76

PASCAL

1623—1662

I remember a sentence in an article by Lionel Johnson, "Some deep and plangent utterance of Lucretius, some dim, half-murmured thought of Pascal."

The "Thoughts" are not a book. They are the rough notes Pascal dictated to a servant for his projected work to be called "Apology for Christianity," which he never wrote.

Macaulay said of Pascal, "His powers of mind were such as have rarely been bestowed on any of the children of men." We read that at twelve he worked out for himself the propositions of Euclid as far as the thirty-second, and that at sixteen he wrote a treatise on conic section.

Then followed his first conversion, his retirement to Port Royal, and his famous "Provincial Letters," which startled Europe, and ranged men who cared about such things, bitterly on the side of the Jansenists or of the Jesuits.

To-day, Pascal lives by his "Thoughts," subtle yet plain, shining with the clarity of the pure in heart.

From PASCAL'S "THOUGHTS"

The heart has reasons unknown to reason ; we know it in a thousand things. I aver that the heart naturally loves the universal being, and naturally loves itself, according as it devotes itself to one or the other ; and it hardens itself against one or the other according to its choice. You have rejected the one and held to the other : is it by reason that you love yourself ?

It is the heart which is conscious of God, not the reason. This is faith—God evident to the heart, and not to the reason. . . .

"I should have soon quitted pleasures," they say, "if I had faith." And I say to you, "You would soon have faith had you quitted pleasures." Thus it is for you to begin. If I could I would give you faith, and thus prove the truth of what you say. But I cannot. But you can, indeed, quit the pleasures, and prove if what I tell you is true. (Pages 10, 25).

77

JOHN BUNYAN

1628—1688

How markedly "The Pilgrim's Progress" lives! How the straightforward, stately prose of Bunyan's homespun style continues to impress readers! How much more the man of mature age finds in its graphic pages than he perceived in youth. Coleridge said that it is one of the few books which might be read repeatedly, and each time with a new and different pleasure.

Charles Kingsley complained that Bunyan's illustrators try to mediævalize his characters—"Silly fellows." What has Bunyan to do with the Middle Ages? He writes for all ages.

Bunyan, as the world knows, began as a tinker; but he was at heart preacher and writer. In 1660 he was arrested while preaching at Ampthill, and was imprisoned for twelve years in Bedford county gaol—incredible! In 1675 he suffered a second imprisonment of six months. During this incarceration he composed the first part of "The Pilgrim's Progress." The second part was written in 1684.

"The Pilgrim's Progress" has been translated into nearly one hundred languages and dialects.

77

From BUNYAN'S " PILGRIM'S PROGRESS "

After this, it was noised abroad that *Mr. Valiant-for-truth* was taken with a summons by the same post as the other ; and had this for a token that the summons was true, *That his pitcher was broken at the fountain.* When he understood it, he called for his friends, and told them of it. Then, said he, I am going to my Father's ; and though with great difficulty I am got hither, yet now I do not repent me of all the trouble I have been at to arrive where I am. My sword I gave to him that shall succeed me in my pilgrimage, and my courage and skill to him that can get it. My marks and scars I carry with me, to be a witness for me, that I have fought his battles who now will be my rewarder, When the day that he must go hence was come, many accompanied him to the riverside, into which as he went he said, *Death, where is thy sting?* And as he went down deeper, he said, *Grave, where is thy victory?* So he passed over, and all the trumpets sounded for him on the other side. (Page 304).

78

SPINOZA

1632—1677

Novalis called Spinoza, "A God-intoxicated man."

At the dedication of the statue of Spinoza at the Hague, in 1882, Renan delivered an address which concluded thus, "This man, from his granite pedestal, will point out to all men the way of blessedness which he found; and ages hence, the cultivated traveller, passing by this spot, will say in his heart, "The truest vision ever had of God came, perhaps, here."

I do not suggest that the young twentieth-century business man should turn at once to page I of this edition of Spinoza's "Ethics," and plod on to page 263. That would be foolish, for "The Ethics" are tough reading. But regard it as a stand-by, an occasional glimpse of reality, and illumination will follow, maybe, to the discovery that "The highest knowledge is the knowledge of God, and therein lies the highest delight of the spirit."

Spinoza was born at Amsterdam, the son of Portuguese Jews. He was persecuted—he made a living by polishing lenses; but his real life was in the eternal quest—knowledge of God.

From SPINOZA'S "ETHICS"

Blessedness consists of love towards God, and this love arises from the third kind of knowledge. And, therefore, this love must be referred to the mind in so far as it is active, and, therefore, it is virtue itself : which is the first point. Again, the more the mind rejoices in this divine love or blessedness, the more it understands, that is, the more power it has over the emotions, and the less passive it is to emotions which are evil. And, therefore, by the very fact that the mind rejoices in this divine love or blessedness, it has the power of restraining lusts, inasmuch as human power to restrain lusts consists of intellect alone. Therefore, no one rejoices in blessedness because he restrained lusts, but on the contrary, the power of restraining lusts arises from blessedness itself. . . .

An ignorant man, besides being agitated in many ways by external causes, never enjoys one true satisfaction of the mind : he lives, moreover, almost unconscious of himself, God, and things, and as soon as he ceases to be passive, ceases to be. On the contrary, the wise man, in so far as he is considered as such, is scarcely moved in spirit : he is conscious of himself, of God, and things by a certain eternal necessity, he never ceases to be, and always enjoys satisfaction of mind. (Page 224).

79

EMERSON

1803—1882

Emerson—transcendental philosopher—is one of the greatest of Americans. He stands by himself : he speaks for himself : “he never lets his thought crystallize into a body of coherent doctrine.” At the heading of his first Essay he places this—

*“ There is no great and no small
To the soul that maketh all.
And where it cometh all things are ;
And it cometh everywhere.”*

Emerson is like a clear sunny day where everything is distinct. Anyone can understand his short forcible, glittering sentences, which give wings to thought. You may spend an hour, profitably and with enjoyment, over one page.

He taught in a school ; entered the Unitarian ministry ; passed from Unitarianism to Transcendentalism ; visited England, met Carlyle, Coleridge and Wordsworth ; returned to America to lecture and write, and to become the chief ethical teacher of the New World.

He was sane, wise and practical—an optimist across whose sun no cloud passed.

79

From EMERSON'S "ESSAYS"

The relations of the soul to the Divine Spirit are so pure, that it is profane to seek to interpose helps. It must be that when God speaketh he should communicate not one thing, but all things ; should fill the world with his voice ; should scatter forth light, nature, time, souls, from the centre of the present thought ; and new date and new create the whole. Whenever a mind is simple, and receives a Divine wisdom, then old things pass away—means, teachers, texts, temples fall ; it lives now, and absorbs past and future into the present hour. . . .

A political victory, a rise of rents, the recovery of your sick, or the return of your absent friend, or some other quite external event, raises your spirits, and you think good days are preparing for you. Do not believe it. It can never be so. Nothing can bring you peace but yourself. Nothing can bring you peace but the triumph of principles. . . .

We need not fear that we can lose anything by the progress of the soul. The soul may be trusted to the end.

(Pages 53, 73, 152).

80

MAZZINI

1805—1872

I have heard orators say on political platforms, in recent years, that Mazzini taught the modern world that there are no such things as rights : there are only duties. A great saying !

In his Essay " To the Italian Working Class," he asks, " Why do I speak to you of your duties before speaking to you of your rights ? "

Some hard things have been said about Mazzini. The " Times " article on the death in 1872 of " this terror of principalities and powers " was judiciously condemnatory.

Fine things, too, have been said. " It was Mazzini who prepared the soil and sowed the seed of Italian unity, Garibaldi who did most of the harvesting, and Cavour who entered into their labours."

On the occasion of the centenary of his birth all Italy, including the King and his Ministers, united to eulogise Mazzini.

These Essays stand as examples of intense conviction, and fervid faith in God and man.

FROM MAZZINI'S "THE DUTIES OF MAN"

The origin of your duties is in God. The definition of your duties is found in His law. The progressive discovery and the application of His law is the task of Humanity.

God exists. I do not need nor do I wish to prove it to you ; to try to do so would seem to me blasphemy, as to deny it would seem foolishness. God exists, because we exist. God lives in our conscience, in the conscience of Humanity, in the universe which surrounds us. Our conscience invokes Him in the most solemn moments of grief and of joy. Humanity has been able to transform, to pollute, but never to suppress His holy name. The Universe manifests Him in the order, the harmony, the intelligence of its motions and of its laws. . . .

You have no master but God in heaven and the People on earth. When you have discovered a line of the Law, of God's will, you must bless it and obey it. When the People, the collective body of your fellows, declare that they hold a certain belief, you must bow your head and abstain from every act of rebellion.

(Pages 21, 78.)

81

WILLIAM JAMES

1842—1910

William James and Henry James were brothers—famous brothers. Somebody said that William wrote philosophy like a novelist, and that Henry wrote fiction like a philosopher.

This is a fascinating book. William James had sympathetic imagination—"the ability to get as it were on the inside of the other fellow's vision." Mr. Bakewell rightly calls William James's philosophy, "the philosophy of open doors."

Here you may read of that misunderstood word "Pragmatism;" a new-old idea which William James fathered. Let him speak.

"The pragmatic method is to try to interpret each notion by tracing its respective practical consequences . . . God is real since he produces real effects."

Another quotation from this Master :

"Who knows whether the faithfulness of individuals here below to their own poor overbeliefs may not actually help God in turn to be more effectively faithful to his own greater tasks."

William James was Professor of Philosophy at Harvard University, U.S.A.

81

From WILLIAM JAMES'S
"THE WILL TO BELIEVE"

Moral questions immediately present themselves as questions whose solution cannot wait for sensible proof. A moral question is a question not of what sensibly exists, but of what is good, or would be good if it did exist. Science can tell us what exists ; but to compare the *worths*, both of what exists and of what does not exist, we must consult not science, but what Pascal calls our heart. Science herself consults her heart when she lays it down that the infinite ascertainment of fact and correction of false belief are the supreme goods for man. Challenge the statement, and science can only repeat it oracularly, or else prove it by showing that such ascertainment and correction bring man all sorts of other goods which man's heart in turn declares. The question of having moral beliefs at all or not having them is decided by our will. Are our moral preferences true or false, or are they only odd biological phenomena, making things good or bad for *us*, but in themselves indifferent ! How can your pure intellect decide ? If your heart does not *want* a world of moral reality, your head will assuredly never make you believe in one. (Page 117).

82

RICHARD JEFFERIES

1848—1887

I have discussed Jefferies as Naturalist in the " Nature " Section : here is his strange, poignant little book which he called " The Story of My Heart," a kind of spiritual autobiography. Or, in his own words, " An Autobiography of a Soul, or of Thought. It is not an autobiography of the petty events of life ; from the author's point of view the soul is the man, and not the clothes he wears."

Mr. C. J. Longman, his publisher, has told how " *The Story of My Heart* " came to his firm. In a prefatory letter Jefferies wrote that he had been meditating upon it seventeen years, and that " no words are wasted in it."

The book was accepted, and when asked for an Analysis to be included in Messrs. Longmans' " *Notes on Books* " Jefferies wrote four and a half pages which are included in this edition.

" *The Story of My Heart* " appeals intensely to many : to some hardly at all.

From JEFFERIES'
"THE STORY OF MY HEART"

I do not hope or fear. At least while I am living I have enjoyed the idea of immortality, and the idea of my own soul. If, then, after death, I am resolved without exception into earth, air and water, and the spirit goes out like a flame, still I shall have had the glory of that thought. . . .

Considering these things, I am obliged by facts and incontrovertible argument to conclude that death is not inevitable to the ideal man. He is shaped for a species of physical immortality. The beauty of form of the ideal human being indicates immortality—the contour, the curve, the outline answer to the idea of life. In the course of ages united effort long continued may eliminate those causes of decay which have grown up in ages past, and after that has been done advance farther and improve the natural state. . . .

Augustus Cæsar, however great his intellect, could not in that balanced head have possessed the ideas familiar enough to the living head of this day. As we have a circle of ideas unknown to Augustus Cæsar, so I argue there are whole circles of ideas unknown to us. It is these that I am so earnestly desirous of discovering. (Pages 40, 157, 158, 169).

PART VIII.
SCIENCE.

83

ROUSSEAU

1712—1778

This famous and very readable book is included in the Science Section because "the science of government and of democracy are powerfully re-stated in its pages." John Morley once referred to the "awakening power" of "The Social Contract." The opening of Chapter I, "Man is born free; and everywhere he is in chains," startles the reader: so does a later "awakening" sentence, "Nothing is more certain than that every man born in slavery is born for slavery."

"The Social Contract" was published with "Emile" in 1762. Rousseau was then fifty years of age, at the height of his powers, read, feared, admired and scorned.

Rousseau led a diversified, romantic, wandering life. He lived for eighteen months at Wooton in Staffordshire writing his "Confessions." "There is a sensuality in Rousseau," said Carlyle. Macaulay refers to "the pitying fondness with which half Europe looked upon Rousseau." John Morley declared that he "sounded a new trumpet note for one of the great battles of humanity."

From ROUSSEAU'S "SOCIAL CONTRACT"

Man is born free ; and everywhere he is in chains. One thinks himself the master of others, and still remains a greater slave than they. How did this change come about ? I do not know. What can make it legitimate ? That question I think I can answer. . . .

If we ask in what precisely consists the greatest good of all, which should be the end of every system of legislation, we shall find it reduce itself to two main objects, liberty and equality—liberty, because all particular dependence means so much force taken from the body of the State, and equality, because liberty cannot exist without it. . . .

Liberty, not being a fruit of all climates, is not within the reach of all peoples. The more this principle, laid down by Montesquieu, is considered, the more its truth is felt ; the more it is combated, the more chance is given to confirm it by new proofs.

(Pages 5, 45, 68).

MICHAEL FARADAY

1791—1867

This well-loved and great man was born the son of a blacksmith at Newington Butts, and became—let his friend and great admirer Professor Tyndall tell. “Taking him for all in all, I think it will be conceded that Michael Faraday was the greatest experimental philosopher the world has ever seen; and I will add the opinion, that the progress of future research will tend, not to dim or to diminish, but to enhance and glorify the labours of this mighty investigator.”

Professor J. Arthur Thomson has written—“‘The Chemical History of a Candle’ is a book that cannot become old-fashioned: its way of teaching is so true and sure.”

Faraday’s Lectures on “The Chemical History of a Candle” were delivered more than once to juvenile audiences at the Royal Institution: the last occasion was at Christmas, 1860.

Faraday was at the Royal Institution for over fifty years. In 1858 he was given a house in Hampton Court. There he died, in 1867, a devout Christian and world famous.

From FARADAY'S
"CHEMICAL HISTORY OF A CANDLE"

I purpose to bring before you, in the course of these lectures, the Chemical History of a Candle. I have taken this subject on a former occasion ; and, were it left to my own will, I should prefer to repeat it almost every year—so abundant is the interest that attaches itself to the subject, so wonderful are the varieties of outlet which it offers into the various departments of philosophy. There is not a law under which any part of this universe is governed which does not come into play, and is touched upon in these phenomena. There is no better, there is no more open door by which you can enter into the study of natural philosophy, than by considering the physical phenomena of a candle. I trust, therefore, I shall not disappoint you in choosing this for my subject rather than any newer topic, which could not be better, were it even so good.

(Page 1).

85

HUGH MILLER

1802—1856

Lord Avebury omitted *Works of Science* from his 100 Books, "because the subject is so progressive." If Science walked in Lord Avebury's prime, it leaps to-day. No work of Science can ever be called final, but there are old favourites: so I include "*The Old Red Sandstone*," friend of our youth, not so much for its subject, which is the knowledge of 85 years ago, but for the example of sturdy, plodding, peering, self-taught Hugh Miller. From sixteen to thirty-three he worked as a stone-mason, studying in his leisure Bacon's and Addison's essays: so acquiring a dignified literary style. "*The Old Red Sandstone*" first appeared in the *Edinburgh Non-intrusion* "Witness," which he edited.

"He was a great naturalist, who yet was tempted into making all knowledge conform to a creed, and reducing the infinite of science to the finite Mosaic terms."

In "*Footprints of the Creator*" (1850), Hugh Miller combated the evolution theory. Darwin was then forty-one: it was nine years before the publication of "*The Origin of Species*."

From HUGH MILLER'S
" OLD RED SANDSTONE "

In the course of the first day's employment I picked up a nodular mass of blue limestone, and laid it open by a stroke of the hammer. Wonderful to relate, it contained inside a beautifully finished piece of sculpture—one of the volutes, apparently, of an Ionic capital ; and not the far-famed walnut of the fairy tale, had I broken the shell and found the little dog lying within, could have surprised me more. Was there another such curiosity in the whole world ? I broke open a few other nodules of similar appearance—for they lay pretty thickly on the shore—and found that there might. In one of these there were what seemed to be the scales of fishes, and the impressions of a few minute bivalves, prettily striated ; in the centre of another there was actually a piece of decayed wood. Of all Nature's riddles, these seemed to me to be at once the most interesting and the most difficult to expound. I treasured them carefully up, and was told by one of the workmen to whom I showed them, that there was a part of the shore about two miles farther to the west where curiously-shaped stones, somewhat like the heads of boarding-pikes, were occasionally picked up . . . (Pages 39, 40).

86

DARWIN

1809—1882

There are many who will like to have the epoch-making "Origin of Species" in this handy form, with the brief but sufficient "Note" by Darwin's disciple, Grant Allen.

I cannot do better than quote a portion of it—"He was a naturalist of the very highest rank, and the discoverer of the famous theory of Natural Selection. The great treatise in which that theory was promulgated, however—"The Origin of Species"—did not appear till 1859, when Darwin was over fifty. It completely revolutionized the sciences of Botany and Zoology; and made the doctrine of Organic Evolution, till then admitted only by a few advanced philosophical biologists, the universal creed of men of science. By that famous book, and by its equally admirable companion volume "The Descent of Man," Darwin will always be most remembered . . . "Organic Evolution triumphed through Darwin."

Huxley said, "One could not converse with Darwin without being reminded of Socrates."

From DARWIN'S "ORIGIN OF SPECIES" (Introduction)

When on board H.M.S. Beagle, as naturalist, I was much struck with certain facts in the distribution of the inhabitants of South America, and in the geological relations of the present to the past inhabitants of that continent. These facts seemed to me to throw some light on the origin of species—that mystery of mysteries, as it has been called by one of our greatest philosophers. On my return home, it occurred to me, in 1837, that something might perhaps be made out on this question by patiently accumulating and reflecting on all sorts of facts which could possibly have any bearing on it. After five years' work I allowed myself to speculate on the subject, and drew up some short notes; these I enlarged in 1844 into a sketch of the conclusions, which then seemed to me probable: from that period to the present day I have steadily pursued the same object. I hope that I may be excused for entering on these personal details, as I give them to show that I have not been hasty in coming to a decision.

(Page 1).

"On the Origin of Species. By means of Natural Selection, or the Preservation Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life." By Charles Darwin. With a "Note" Grant Allen. World's Classics. Oxford University Press. 2s.

87

HERBERT SPENCER

1820—1903

Herbert Spencer's father was a schoolmaster, and a schoolmaster—the world was his school—the son remained till the end.

Surely "Essays on Education" is his most popular work. Those who shrink from "The System of Synthetic Philosophy" and "First Principles" find with delight that these Essays on such subjects as "What Knowledge is of Most Worth?" and on "Intellectual, Moral, and Physical Education," are very readable.

Being by Herbert Spencer they are aggressive, and they may have seemed revolutionary in 1859, but as Professor Charles W. Eliot, late President of Harvard University, says in his Introduction, "Many schools, both public and private, have now adopted—in most cases unconsciously—many of Spencer's more detailed suggestions."

He was so formidable a 19th century Figure, so much of a giant Intellect, and the stories about his gruffness and rudeness are so many, and so amusing, that it is delightful to find him, on the subject of Education, so human and companionable.

From HERBERT SPENCER'S
"ESSAYS ON EDUCATION"

How to live?—that is the essential question for us. Not how to live in the mere material sense only, but in the widest sense. The general problem which comprehends every special problem is—the right ruling of conduct in all directions under all circumstances. In what way to treat the body ; in what way to treat the mind ; in what way to manage our affairs ; in what way to bring up a family ; in what way to behave as a citizen ; in what way to utilize those sources of happiness which nature supplies—how to use all our faculties to the greatest advantage of ourselves and others—how to live completely ? And this being the great thing needful for us to learn, is, by consequence, the great thing which education has to teach. To prepare us for complete living is the function which education has to discharge ; and the only rational mode of judging of an educational course is, to judge in what degree it discharges such function. . . .

We conclude, then, that for discipline, as well as for guidance, science is of chiefest value. . . .

(Pages 6, 7, 42).

JOHN TYNDALL

1820—1893

“Professor of Natural Philosophy at the Royal Institution, colleague of Faraday, whom he succeeded as Superintendent, formed friendship with Huxley”—so runs the record.

Tyndall made his first journey to the Alps with Huxley. In the garden of the Pension Ober, at Interlaken, he received his alpenstock, bearing his name, “not marked, however, by the vulgar brands of the country, but by the solar beams which had been converged upon it by the pocket lens” of—Huxley.

Men of Science at play; but their play had a very serious side—scientific observations. Huxley was a poor mountaineer. Tyndall was strenuous and indefatigable.

Five years later, in 1861, Tyndall and Huxley were joined by Lord Avebury. So the climbs went on, and in time this early Mountaineering Classic was produced. Most peaks have been climbed since those days, many books have been written, but Tyndall’s “Glaciers of the Alps” holds its own.

From TYNDALL'S "GLACIERS OF THE ALPS" (Second Ascent of Mount Blanc)

The clouds whirled, and the little snow granules hit spitefully against the skin wherever it was exposed. The temperature of the air was 20° Fahr. below the freezing point. I was too intent upon my work to heed the cold much, but I was numbed ; one of my fingers had lost sensation, and my right heel was in pain : still I had no thought of forsaking my observation until Mr. Wills came to me and said that we must return speedily, for Balmat's hands were *gelées*. I did not comprehend the full significance of the word ; but, looking at the porters, they presented such an aspect of suffering that I feared to detain them longer. They looked like worn old men, their hair and clothing white with snow, and their faces blue, withered, and anxious-looking. The hole being ready, I asked Balmat for the magnet to arrange the index of the thermometer : his hands seemed powerless. I struck my tent, deposited the instrument, and, as I watched the covering of it up, some of the party, among whom were Mr. Wills and Balmat, commenced the descent.

(Pages 167, 168).

89

T. H. HUXLEY

1825—1895

Huxley was President of the Royal Society from 1883 to 1885; he delivered his famous Romanes lecture at Oxford on "Evolution and Ethics" in 1893: he was the hardest-hitting controversialist of his day: he wrote sturdy, vivid, fearless prose, straightforward as a modern arterial road: he was a foeman worthy of anyone's steel: he usually conquered.

The first Essay in this volume is "On a Piece of Chalk," which might be read with Faraday's "The Chemical History of a Candle." Huxley tells us that the man who should know the true history of the bit of chalk which every carpenter carries about in his breeches-pocket is likely, "if he will think his knowledge out to its ultimate results, to have a truer, and therefore a better conception of this wonderful universe, and of man's relation to it, than the most learned student who is deep-read in the records of humanity and ignorant of those of nature."

A piece of chalk! The lecture was delivered at Norwich in 1868.

From HUXLEY'S "LECTURES AND LAY SERMONS" (A Liberal Education)

Yet, it is a very plain and elementary truth that the life, the fortune, and the happiness of every one of us, and, more or less, of those who are connected with us, do depend upon our knowing something of the rules of a game infinitely more difficult and complicated than chess. It is a game which has been played for untold ages, every man and woman of us being one of the two players in a game of his or her own. The chess-board is the world, the pieces are the phenomena of the universe, the rules of the game are what we call the laws of nature. The player on the other side is hidden from us. We know that his play is always fair, just and patient. But also we know, to our cost, that he never overlooks a mistake, or makes the smallest allowance for ignorance. To the man who plays well, the highest stakes are paid, with that sort of overflowing generosity with which the strong shows delight in strength. And one who plays ill is checkmated—without haste, but without remorse. . . . (Page 58).

PART IX.
THE ARTS.

BENVENUTO CELLINI

1500—1570

J. A. Symonds said of Cellini, "He possessed the temperament of a born artist, blent in almost equal proportions with that of a born bravo."

On his own confession Cellini was as expert with sword and dagger, as with his goldsmith's tools. He might have added—the pen, for this vivid, bustling, unmoral book is one of the most interesting Autobiographies ever written.

Goldsmith, Sculptor, Engraver, Bravo, Bandit, Genius—that is Benvenuto Cellini!

The volume contains the story of the casting of his Perseus, a narrative of intense interest to craftsmen, and his escape from the castle of St. Angelo, where he had been flung for murder. His reputation as a goldsmith lessens. The "Cellini Vase" in the British Museum is not by him. He was probably greater as author than as a craftsman; and to again quote J. A. Symonds "From the pages of his Autobiography the Genius of the Renaissance, incarnate in a single personality, leans forth and speaks to us."

From **BENVENUTO CELLINI'S**
“ **AUTOBIOGRAPHY** ”

About this time there came to Florence a Sienese called Girolamo Marretti, who had lived a long time in Turkey, and was a very intelligent man. One day he came to my shop and commissioned me to make a gold medal for wearing in a hat, the design to be Hercules wrenching the lion's mouth open. So I set about the thing, and while I was working at it Michel Angelo Buonarroto came several times to see it. Now I had taken a great deal of pains with it, and the attitude of the figure was so fine, and the spirit of the animal so admirably expressed, that it had nothing in common with the work of such artists as had designed the same kind of thing before. Then, also, my method of working was entirely new to the divine Michel Angelo. And so he praised my work ; and this was such an incitement to me to do well as I cannot describe. (Page 87).

SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS

1723—1792

A great portrait painter, a great Figure in British art, first President of the Royal Academy (1768), Sir Joshua Reynolds also conquered modestly in literature. The art student of to-day possibly finds his Discourses old-fashioned and insipid ; but they are in the grand manner, and they are noble expressions of 18th century oratory, and the way of Academic painting. Maybe Johnson and Burke touched up the Discourses ; but the painting opinions are Sir Joshua's own, and they have done much to give weight and influence to the Royal Academy.

Samuel Rogers, in an account of the last Discourse on the 10th of December, 1790, describes the semi-circle of chairs arranged " in front of the pulpit " for Mr. Burke, Mr. Boswell and others. When Sir Joshua had concluded with his moving reference to Michael Angelo, Burke advanced, and taking the lecturer's hand said, quoting from " Paradise Lost,"

*" The Angel ended, and in Adam's ear
So charming left his voice, that he awhile
Thought him still speaking, still stood fix'd to hear."*

In 1746 Sir Joshua founded the Literary Club to give, as he said, Dr. Johnson " unlimited opportunities of talking."

From REYNOLDS' "DISCOURSES"

The first thing required to excel in our art, or I believe in any art, is not only a love for it, but even an enthusiastic ambition to excel in it. This never fails of success proportioned to the natural abilities with which the artist has been endowed by Providence. Of Gainsborough, we certainly know that his passion was not the acquirement of riches, but excellence in his art ; and to enjoy that honourable fame which is sure to attend it. That *he felt this ruling passion strong in death*, I am myself a witness. A few days before he died, he wrote me a letter to express his acknowledgments for the good opinion I entertained of his abilities, and the manner in which (he had been informed) I always spoke of him ; and desired he might see me once more before he died. I am aware how flattering it is to myself to be thus connected with the dying testimony which this excellent painter bore to his art. But I cannot prevail on myself to suppress that I was not connected with him, by any habits of familiarity : if any little jealousies had subsisted between us, they were forgotten in those moments of sincerity ; and he turned towards me as one who was engrossed by the same pursuits, and who deserved his good opinion by being sensible of his excellence.

(Page 216).

"*The Discourses of Sir Joshua Reynolds.*" To which are added his *Letters to "The Idler."* With an Introduction by Austin Dobson. *The World's Classics.* Oxford University Press. 2s.

HECTOR BERLIOZ

1803—1869

"The music-ridden, brutal, undisciplined creature of the Autobiography," writes the anonymous author of the Introduction—an understanding Introduction—"could not possibly be the man who was rich in the unswerving affection of Heine, Liszt, Ernst, Alexandre, Heller, Hiller, Jules Janin, Dumas and Bertin." We are then told that the real Berlioz, musician and poet, is revealed in his *Letters*.

That may be, but it is his fiery *Autobiography* that the world reads, not the quiet letters. Have the torments of a musician's soul ever been more vividly expressed?

One contrasts 20th century Hector Berlioz with 16th century Benvenuto Cellini, pure artists, one in metal, the other in music, dashing their temperaments against an unheeding or protesting world.

The career of Cellini greatly impressed Berlioz. He composed an opera upon the subject. In his own words, "The overture made a furore, the rest was unmercifully hissed."

From "THE LIFE OF HECTOR BERLIOZ "

. . . It was Paganini.

This was on the 22nd December, 1833.

Thus began my friendship with that great artist to whom I owe so much, and whose generosity towards me has given rise to such absurd and wicked reports. Some weeks later he said :

"I have a beautiful Strad viola which I long to play in public. Will you write me a solo for it? I could not trust anyone but you."

"To do that one ought to play the viola," I objected. "You alone could do it satisfactorily."

But he insisted :

"I am too ill to compose ; it would be useless to try. You will do it properly."

So to please him I tried a viola solo with orchestral accompaniment, feeling sure that his power would enable him to dominate the orchestra. It seemed to me an entirely new idea, and I burned to carry it through. However, he called soon after and asked to see a sketch of his part.

"This won't do," he said, looking at the pauses, "there is too much silence. I must be playing all the time."

"Did I not tell you so?" I answered. "What you want is a viola concerto, and you are the only one who can write it." (Page 138).

93

JOHN RUSKIN

1819—1900

Ruskin first met Turner in 1840, when he was twenty-one years of age. From that encounter dates his famous, wilful, magnificent, interminable "Modern Painters." For many years it was the most formidable art book of the day; but as a guide for youth "Modern Painters" is no longer held in high esteem. Its prolixity, its opinions, so often right, so often wrong, according to modern standards, are against it; but what a glorious record it is for those who love immortal prose! What an inspiration to beautiful living!

"Modern Painters" took Ruskin seventeen years to write. Originally he intended to call it, "Turner and the Ancients," for it was to be a glorification of Turner against all comers.

The initial volume was issued in 1843 "By a Graduate of Oxford": his name first appeared on the title page of the edition of 1851. I don't suppose Turner understood a page of "Modern Painters." He was a Doer, not a Theoriser.

But the two great names will be forever associated—Turner and Ruskin.

From RUSKIN'S "MODERN PAINTERS"

I said long ago, even of Turner : " Into the spirit of the pine he cannot enter." He understood the glacier at once ; he had seen the force of sea on shore too often to miss the action of those crystal-crested waves. But the pine was strange to him, adverse to his delight in broad and flowing line ; he refused its magnificent erectness. Magnificent !—nay, sometimes, almost terrible. Other trees, tufting crag or hill, yield to the form and sway of the ground, clothe it with soft compliance, are partly its subjects, partly its flatterers, partly its comforters. But the pine rises in serene resistance, self-contained ; nor can I ever without awe stay long under a great Alpine cliff, far from all house or work of men, looking up to its companies of pine, as they stand on the inaccessible juts and perilous ledges of the enormous wall, in quiet multitudes, each like the shadow of the one beside it—upright, fixed, spectral, as troops of ghosts standing on the walls of Hades, not knowing each other—dumb for ever. You cannot reach them, cannot cry to them ; those trees never heard human voice ; they are far above all sound but of the winds. No foot ever stirred fallen leaf of theirs. All comfortless they stand, between the two eternities of the Vacancy and the Rock . . .

(Vol. 5, Pages 79, 80).

"Modern Painters." By John Ruskin. With an Introduction by Lionel Cust. Everyman's Library. Dent. 5 Vols. 2s. each.

PART X.
TRAVEL.

JOHN STOW

C. 1525—1605

Stow's "Survey of London" might have been included under "History,"—but when I roam London, sometimes with Stow's book in my pocket, walking, often in Stow's footsteps, footsore, yet absorbed, it is Stow as a traveller who accompanies me in spirit.

This devoted Londoner, who spent his fortune on his literary pursuits, acknowledged that the model of his "Survey" was Lambarde's "Perambulation of Kent." Being a "fee'd chronicler" to the Corporation Stow had access to documents of great value.

Stow was an observant, human kind of man, who delighted to introduce personal touches that came within his observation.

The first edition of his "Survey of London" was published in 1598, when he was over seventy years of age. His monument may be seen in St. Andrew Undershaft, Leadenhall Street.

He is described as being tall of stature, and lean of body.

From STOW'S "SURVEY OF LONDON"

Anciently, until the Conqueror's time, and two hundred years after, the city of London was watered, besides the famous river of Thames on the south part, with the river of Wells, as it was then called, on the west ; with the water called Walbrooke running through the midst of the city in the river of Thames, serving the heart thereof ; and with a fourth water or bourn, which ran within the city through Langborne ward, watering that part in the east. In the west suburbs was also another great water, called Oldborne, which had its fall into the river of Wells ; then were there three principal fountains, or wells, in the other suburbs ; to wit, Holy well, Clement's well, and Clarkes' well. Near unto this last-named fountain were divers other wells, to wit, Skinners' well, Fags' well, Tode well, Loders' well, and Radwell. All which said wells, having the fall of their overflowing in the aforesaid river, much increased the stream, and in that place gave it the name of Well. In West Smithfield there was a pool, in records called Horsepoole, and one other pool, near unto the parish church of St. Giles without Cripplegate. Besides all which, they had in every street and lane of the city divers fair wells and fresh springs ; and after this manner was this city then served with sweet and fresh waters, which being since decayed, other means have been sought to supply the want.

(Page 12).

"The Survey of London." By John Stow, Citizen of London. With an Introduction by Henry B. Wheatley. Everyman's Library. Dent. 2s.

95

RICHARD HAKLUYT

C. 1552—1616

Richard Hakluyt, geographer, ambassador, clergyman, died the same year as Shakespeare. His claim to fame is established by the books he wrote, or edited, giving accounts, in spacious, dignified prose, of the voyages of discovery made by famous "gentlemen adventurers."

He was not much of a wanderer himself: he was a collector or editor of the records of such great travellers as Columbus, Cabot, Frobisher, Drake and Hawkins. The books he wrote or compiled were long, unwieldy and splendid, for they describe the beginnings of the expansion of Europe.

Few, to-day, have the time to read his books, say, "The Principall Navigations, Voiages, and Discoveries of the English Nation"; but they will find in this volume a small selection of the voyages, in modern spelling, from the pen of this arm-chair adventurer who compiled "the great prose epic of the English Nation."

From HAKLUYT'S " VOYAGES "

CHANCELLOR'S SHIPS

In certain parts of the ocean a kind of worm is bred, which many times pierceth and eateth through the strongest oak that is : and, therefore, that the mariners and the rest to be employed in this voyage might be free and safe from this danger, they cover a piece of the keel of the ship with thin sheets of lead ; and having thus built the ships and furnished them with armour and artillery, then followed a second care, no less troublesome and necessary than the former, namely, the provision of victuals, which was to be made according to the time and length of the voyage.

And whereas they afore-determined to have the east part of the world sailed unto, and yet that the sea towards the same was not open, except they kept the northern tract, whereas yet it was doubtful whether there were any passage yea or no, they resolved to victual the ships for eighteen months, which they did for this reason : for our men being to pass that high and cold part of the world, they wisely foreseeing it, allowed them six months victual to sail to the place, so much more to remain there if the extremity of the winter hindered their return, and so much more also for the time of their coming home.

(Pages 23, 24).

"Stories from Hakluyt." Selected and Edited by Richard Wilson. *The King's Treasuries.* Dent. 1s. 4d.

96

LAURENCE STERNE

1713—1768

A sensitive, a sentimentalist, a humourist, an indulger in stories wherein laughter overwhelms blushes, an Irishman, a clergyman, author of "Tristram Shandy" and books of Sermons—such was Laurence Sterne, one of the most delightful of writers, gay and pathetic, with a literary style that can be immensely enjoyed, but never imitated. He was the first to use the epithet "sentimental."

Said Coleridge, "Sterne's morals are bad, but I don't think they can do much harm to anyone whom they would not find bad enough before."

You can read "The Sentimental Journey" a score of times, always with rippling laughter. It was published in 1768—"A Sentimental Journey through France and Italy, by Mr. Yorick."

Alas, poor Yorick!

Consumption overtook him, and he died in the "Sentimental Journey" year at his lodgings, No. 41, Old Bond Street.

From

STERNE'S "A SENTIMENTAL JOURNEY"

"They order," said I, "this matter better in France."

"You have been in France?" said my gentleman, turning quick upon me with the most civil triumph in the world.

Strange! quoth I, debating the matter with myself, that one and twenty miles sailing, for 'tis absolutely no further from Dover to Calais, should give a man these rights—I'll look into them. So giving up the argument, I went straight to my lodgings, put up half a dozen shirts and a black pair of silk breeches—"the coat I have on," said I, looking at the sleeve, "will do"—took a place in the Dover stage; and the packet sailing at nine the next morning, by three I had got sat down to my dinner upon a fricassee'd chicken so incontestably in France that had I died that night of an indigestion the whole world could not have suspended the effects of the *Droits d'aubaine*; my shirts and black pair of silk breeches, portmanteau and all, must have gone to the king of France—even the little picture which I have so long worn and so often have told thee, Eliza, I would carry with me into my grave, would have been torn from my neck. . . . (Pages 1, 2).

97

WILLIAM COBBETT

1762—1835

A sentence at the beginning of an article by John O' London on William Cobbett caught my eyes. "He was the 'man in the street' raised to the nth power." Another at the end also held me, "He is none the less helpful because he never soars." These two sentences fairly sum up William Cobbett.

Let me give a third, an episode, from his own direct self. There had been a stormy meeting of Sussex farmers in which he had played a stormy part. It was moved that he should be put out of the room. "I rose," says Cobbett, "that they might see the man they had to put out." He was then sixty, "tall and straightly built, with sharp eyes and a round and ruddy appearance."

Essayist, politician, agriculturist, and a fighter, he was born at "The Jolly Farmer" on the east bank of the Wey at Farnham. Swift's "Tale of a Tub," which he read sitting against a hay stack, he regarded as a "birth of intellect."

"Rural Rides," a jolly, companionable, home-travel book, was written night by night after long days in the saddle.

From COBBETT'S "RURAL RIDES"

My road here pointed towards the west. It soon wheeled round towards the south ; and, all of a sudden, I found myself upon the edge of a hill, as lofty and as steep as that at Folkestone, at Reigate, or at Ashmansworth. It was the same famous chalk ridge that I was crossing again. When I got to the edge of the hill, and before I got off my horse to lead him down this more than mile of hill, I sat and surveyed the prospect before me, and to the right and to the left. This is what the people of Kent call the Garden of Eden. It is a district of meadows, corn fields, hop-gardens, and orchards of apples, pears, cherries and filberts, with very little if any land which cannot, with propriety, be called good. There are plantations of chestnut and of ash frequently occurring ; and as these are cut when long enough to make poles for hops, they are at all times objects of great beauty. . . .

From Maidstone to Merryworth is about seven miles, and these are the finest seven miles that I have ever seen in England or elsewhere. (Page 252).

"Rural Rides." By William Cobbett. With Introduction by Edward Thomas. Everyman's Library. Dent. 2 Vols. 2s. each.

98

GEORGE BORROW

1803—1881

Borrow's "Lavengro" is included in the Romance and Fiction Section. Here we find this linguist and man of action as Traveller in the employment of the British and Foreign Bible Society, commissioned to circulate the Scriptures in Spain and Portugal. The Society engaged a traveller, and caught a genius.

The beginning of the adventure was like Borrow. He walked from Norfolk to London to see the B. and F. B. S. people, and covered the ground in twenty-seven hours at a cost of fivepence halfpenny.

He agreed to learn Manchu-Tartar, then to proceed to Russia to see through the press a translation of the New Testament into Russian.

This was done : then he was sent to Spain and Portugal. The Society acknowledged in him "a talent remarkably suited to their purposes."

"Since Luther," says Edward Thomas, "there has hardly been such a Protestant as Borrow. But he would talk of amethysts to a Catholic Archbishop who could talk of nothing else."

Borrow did his Spain work for the British and Foreign Bible Society well. He also produced a book of genius.

From BORROW'S "BIBLE IN SPAIN"

We had scarcely been five minutes at the window, when we suddenly heard the clattering of horses' feet hastening down the street called the Calle de Carretas. The house in which we had stationed ourselves was, as I have already observed, just opposite to the post office, at the left of which this street debouches from the north into the Puerta del Sol ; as the sounds became louder and louder, the cries of the crowd below diminished, and a species of panic seemed to have fallen upon all ; once or twice, however, I could distinguish the words, Quesada ! Quesada ! The foot soldiers stood calm and motionless, but I observed that the cavalry, with the young officer who commanded them, displayed both confusion and fear, exchanging with each other some hurried words ; all of a sudden that part of the crowd which stood near the mouth of the Calle de Carretas fell back in great disorder, leaving a considerable space unoccupied, and the next moment Quesada, in complete general's uniform, and mounted on a bright bay thoroughbred English horse, with a drawn sword in his hand, dashed at full gallop into the area, in much the same manner as I have seen a Manchegan bull rush into the amphitheatre when the gates of his pen are suddenly flung open. (Page 137).

"The Bible in Spain, or The Journeys, Adventures and Imprisonments of an Englishman in an Attempt to Circulate the Scriptures in the Peninsula." By George Borrow. With an Introduction by Edward Thomas. Everyman's Library. Dent. 2s.

ALEXANDER WILLIAM KINGLAKE

1809—1891

This is a book of youth by the author of that lengthy classic (who reads it to-day?) the "History of the War in the Crimea," in eight or is it nine volumes?

Yes, a book of youth, spirited, reflective, ardent and delightful. Kinglake made the Eastern tour described in "Eothen" in 1835 at the age of twenty-six.

Yes, it is a book of youth, written, as Mr. Harold Spender says "before his bright spirits were clouded with that vast and obscure task (History of the Crimean War) which spent so much of his literary life."

It is a book of enjoyment, not of instruction, enjoyment in the Things Seen, dwelt upon by a quick mind and converted into literary pictures. Only a young man could have written the passage on Nazareth—"I was fevered with the zeal of an insane devotion to the heavenly queen of Christendom." Only a young man could have written the passage on "The Sphinx."

From KINGLAKE'S "EOTHEN"

And near the Pyramids, more wondrous and more wondrous and more awful than all else in the land of Egypt, there sits the lonely Sphynx. Comely the creature is, but the comeliness is not of this world : the once worshipped beast is a deformity and a monster to this generation ; and yet you can see that those lips, so thick and heavy, were fashioned according to some ancient mould of beauty—some mould of beauty now forgotten—forgotten because that Greece drew forth Cytherea from the flashing foam of the Ægean, and in her image created new forms of beauty, and made it a law among men that the short and proudly-wreathed lip should stand for the sign, and the main condition of loveliness through all generations to come. Yet still there lives on the race of those who were beautiful in the fashion of the elder world ; and Christian girls of Coptic blood will look on you with the sad, serious gaze, and kiss you your charitable hand with the big pouting lips of the very Sphynx.

Laugh and mock if you will at the worship of stone idols ; but mark ye this, ye breakers of images, that in one regard, the stone idol bears awful semblance of Deity—unchangefulness in the midst of change—the same seeming will and intent for ever and ever inexorable !

(Page 181).

100

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

1850—1894

There are many still living who knew Robert Louis Stevenson. A book has been published with the unique title, "I can Remember Robert Louis Stevenson."

He paddled "An Inland Voyage" in 1876, when he was twenty-six, another travel book of youth; but how different from "Eothen."

Many years later, speaking of "An Inland Voyage" and "Travels with a Donkey," Stevenson remarked that though they contained nothing but fresh air and a certain style, they had a simplicity which left him in his later work.

Who would have a word of these two Travel Books changed? They were the opening window of his genius.

Stevenson was two years older when he took those "Travels with a Donkey." Mouse-coloured Modestine has passed into history. Now she and R. L. S. belong to Everyman.

100

From STEVENSON'S
"AN INLAND VOYAGE "

And so a letter at Pontoise decided us, and we drew up our keels for the last time out of that river of Oise that had faithfully piloted them, through rain and sunshine, for so long. For so many miles had this fleet and footless beast of burthen charioted our fortunes, that we turned our back upon it with a sense of separation. We had made a long detour out of the world, but now we were back in the familiar places, where life itself makes all the running, and we are carried to meet adventure without a stroke of the paddle. Now we were to return, like the voyager in the play, and see what rearrangements fortune had perfected the while in our surroundings ; what surprises stood ready made for us at home ; and whither and how far the world had voyaged in our absence. You may paddle all day long ; but it is when you come back at nightfall, and look in at the familiar room, that you find Love or Death awaiting you beside the stove ; and the most beautiful adventures are not those we go to seek.

(Pages 91, 92).

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